

The continuing teachers education of a paulista city according to pedagogical counselors

A formação continuada de professores de um município paulista segundo orientadores pedagógicos

La formación continua del profesores de un municipio paulista segun consejeros pedagógicos

Marco Aurélio Alves² 

Elvira Cristina Martins Tassoni³ 

Abstract: This paper discusses the principles of continuing teachers education of the final years of the Elementary School from a municipal education network in the countryside of São Paulo from 2010 to 2014. It was identified perspectives on how the continuing teacher education should be according to documents from the Municipal Department of Education and the educational practices of pedagogical counselors. This is a study based on a qualitative research approach. The method included documents and semi-structured interviews analysis with five pedagogical coordinators and two educational counselors responsible for the continuing education programs in the city. The results show that the educational network has chosen an antagonistic program model: pragmatic and neoliberal. There are broken dialogues between schools and the Municipal Education Department, due to the teachers' environment conditions, blocking a consolidation of a continuing teacher education policy in the city.

Keywords: On-duty continuing teacher education programs. Continuing teachers education. Pedagogical coordinator.

Resumo: Este artigo discute os princípios da formação continuada de professores dos anos finais do Ensino Fundamental, em uma rede municipal de ensino do interior paulista, entre 2010 e 2014. Identificaram-se as perspectivas acerca da formação continuada de professores, em documentos da Secretaria Municipal de Educação, e a prática educacional, segundo a visão de orientadores pedagógicos. Trata-se de um estudo de caso de abordagem qualitativa. O método incluiu a análise de documentos e entrevistas semiestruturadas com cinco orientadores pedagógicos e dois coordenadores responsáveis pela formação continuada no município. Os resultados indicaram que a rede de ensino tem optado pela constituição de modelos formativos antagônicos, de teores pragmáticos e neoliberais. Há diálogos desajustados entre as escolas e a Secretaria Municipal de Educação, fruto das condições de trabalho do professor, atravancando a consolidação da política de formação continuada de professores no município.

Palavras-chave: Formação de professores em serviço. Formação continuada de professores. Orientador pedagógico.

Resumen: En este artículo se discute los principios de la formación continua de profesores en los últimos años de la Educación Primaria, en una red municipal de enseñanza del interior de São Paulo, entre los años 2010 y 2014. El estudio identificó las perspectivas involucradas en la formación continua de profesores, en documentos de la Secretaría Municipal de Educación, y de la práctica educacional, de acuerdo con el punto de vista de consejeros pedagógicos. Es un estudio de caso con enfoque cualitativo. En la metodología hay análisis de documentos y encuestas semiestruturadas, aplicadas a cinco consejeros pedagógicos y dos coordinadores encargados de la formación continua en el municipio. Los resultados indican que la red de enseñanza ha optado por la constitución de modelos formativos antagonistas, de contenidos pragmáticos y neoliberales. Resultado de las condiciones de trabajo del profesor, hay diálogos desarticulados entre las escuelas y la

¹ **Submitted:** 08 July 2018 - **Accepted:** 01 July 2019 - **Published:** 24 Dec. 2019

² Pontifical Catholic University of Campinas (PUC-Campinas) – Email: marko.alves77@gmail.com

³ Pontifical Catholic University of Campinas (PUC-Campinas) – Email: cristinatassoni@gmail.com

Secretaría Municipal de Educación que impiden la consolidación de la política de formación continua de profesores en el municipio.

Palabras clave: *Formación del Profesorado. Formación continua de profesores. Consejero pedagógico.*

Introduction

This article results from a research¹ that aims a discussion on the following issues: How did the Continuing Teachers Education policy – for the final years of Elementary School between 2010 and 2014 – be constituted in the municipal network of a city in the state of São Paulo? Which approximations and/or distances are possible to identify between the official discourse and the practice of the Educational Unit (EU), according to pedagogical coordinators (PC)?

For this, it was done a case study of a qualitative approach, starting from a bibliographical revision on the Continuing Teachers Education (CTE) towards the analysis of official documents – by using the methodological subsidies of Bogdan and Biklen (1994) and André (1984) – in addition to semi-structured interviews with five pedagogical coordinators linked to an EU from each region of the city investigated and two educational counselors responsible for the CTE policy of the city.

The analyzes of the interviews were based on the theoretical and methodological assumptions of Aguiar and Ozella (2013), who propose strategies to apprehend the meanings attributed to the topic by the participants.

Based on the transcribed interviews, it was done elaborated and systematic readings in order to select excerpts from the participants, named by Aguiar and Ozella (2013) of pre-indicators. The agglutination of these pre-indicators suggested broader axes of analysis, called indicators, that pointed to the elaboration of meaning nuclei. According to these authors, the production of nuclei is a constructive-interpretive process that should represent the central aspects of the subjects and be understood as a stage in which, “through the dialectical articulation of the parts, it advances towards the concrete thought, the zones of meaning” (AGUIAR; OZELLA, 2013, p. 310).

Three nuclei of meaning were elaborated: (i) the understanding about the CTE and the role of each of the involved ones; (ii) the dialogue between the school and the Municipal Department of Education (MDE): organization of courses, offer job and working hours; (iii) the influence of CTE in school and teaching practice: needs and changes. Later, it will be presented each of these nuclei, bringing the official discourse through the interviews with two maximum representatives of the MDE referring to the CTE – identified as Educational Counselors (EC) 1 and 2 – and the speech of the EU from the point of view of the PC – identified as PC 1, PC 2, PC 3, PC 4 and PC 5.

Thus, this work organizes the text as follows: brief observations about the CTE policy in Brazil; our view on the Continuing Education Guidelines of the investigated city; discussion on the nuclei of meaning constructed, as well as some reflections about the

guiding principles of the CTE and the supposed (in)coherences between the MDE discourse and the EU practice of the city.

Some observations on the continuing teachers education policy in Brazil

Some studies have shown that CTE is considered the key to improving education in the country. According to Gatti (2008), in the late 20th century, in developed countries, the discourse of constant professional updating has increased, seen as an important prerequisite for the job, including educational systems.

Galindo and Inforsato (2008) warn that, in the same period, the Brazilian Government started to invest heavily in the CTE.

Davis *et al.* (2011) found two relevant models that feature the CTE proposals: a) “deficit model”, from which the CTE is thought based on possible fragilities of the initial education of teachers, aiming to supply them in an individualized perspective; b) a model based on the dynamism of the educational area, recognizing its complexity, as well as the intense production of knowledge, generating new ways of understanding human development and learning processes. According to the last model, the CTE must be inherent to the teaching profession, because it is a field that demands constant updates.

However, Gatti (2008) points that the expansion of the CTE in the country, instead of acting in the in-depth knowledge, has been seen more to soften the fragilities of the initial education of teachers. According to the author, the equation (not necessarily actual) concerns an idea that improving educational processes would lead to an improvement of the economy by “qualifying people for the knowledge and consumption society” (GATTI, 2008, p. 63). Therefore, Gatti (2008) denounces that the CTE based on a material and economic perspective leaves aside the concerns with the human education.

Saviani (2008) makes a balance between 1991 and 2001, contributing to reflections on the influences of educational reforms in the CTE programs, which, since the 1990s, have assumed a more pragmatic character in a movement started with: valorization of requalification of workers (neoprodutivism); the idea that the teacher should be the mediator of the learning process (neo-New School philosophies); the concern to subsidize a society characterized by diversity (neoconstrutivism); and finally, the centralization of a model that conceives the teacher as a service provider, the student as client and education as a product (neotechnicism). From the studies of Saviani (2008), it was possible to note how education is increasingly in the hands of private initiative, without due care with the desirable quality.

According to Maués (2003, p. 101), the emphasis on the practical aspects of education of teachers is due to an international context that believes that the future teachers need to have “[...] contact with the environment in which should take action, accepting, from the beginning of their education, specific tasks and having a direct attendance to the achievement of them”. To the author, international educational reforms were justified by the argument that “educational courses have been very theoretical, unrelated to the school environment [...]”.

Both Saviani (2008) and Gatti (2008) have pointed to Brazil as a signatory of these international educational reforms, encouraging the CTE in private institutions of dubious quality, as well as valuing the practice to the detriment of theory or praxis.

In the opinion of some researchers, such as Scalcon (2008), the praxis is fundamental in the scope of education of teachers, because it allows the interpretation of the world in order to transform it. For this author, praxis considers “the essence of the reality captured by concrete thought and in consideration to the dialectical movement of knowledge elaboration that goes from practice to theory” with a view to finding relations between the micro and the macro (SCALCON, 2008, p. 504).

The epistemology of praxis, in the dimension of education of teachers, also assumes the role of mediator, since it enables the identification of the “[...] limits of a pedagogical action based on processes of formation alienated and dehumanizing because they are based on hegemony of the values of the dominant class” (SCALCON, 2008, p. 505).

Thus, it seems reasonable to understand that the epistemology of praxis is broader, since it considers socio-historical relations, allowing the teacher a more global vision in the interpretation of the world, and consequently in the intention to transform it.

The continuing education guidelines in the analyzed city

In 2010, the MDE of the analyzed city, based on a Commission of Pedagogical Advisory Council – constituted by six specialists (a coordinator of the Education Teachers Sector, two educational counselors and three pedagogical coordinators) –, a document presenting the Continuing Education Guidelines for Professionals of Education. Throughout this process, it was possible to obtain the participation of the teachers and to observe that not all the proposals of the Commission were well accepted by them.

Among the controversial topics is the issue of exclusive dedication: the collective of the teachers demanded the non-compulsory concentration of teachers in only one EU, as well as the differentiation of collective times and time for class preparation, without reduction of the first nor of the optional CTE.

We highlight in the document three relevant aspects about the CTE. The first one refers to education of teachers as a right and a duty. However, the city does not comply with Article 67, item II of the Law on Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDBEN) 9394/96 (BRASIL, 1996), according to which the education professional is entitled to paid leave to complete postgraduate courses. In the legal provisions of the investigated city, there is no mention regarding the possibility of any type of leave (paid or not) for education of teachers at this level. We only found references to paid leave for the participation of teachers in short-term events, such as Seminars, Colloquiums and Congresses. The way to ensure the legislature in LDBEN/96 has been the judicial one.

The second aspect that governs the CTE policy in the city is the consideration of this type of education of teachers as inherent to the work of the education professional, consonant

the studies of Davis *et al.* (2011). However, the city does not offer concrete conditions for this, since it violates Law 11,738/2008, which deals with the salary (BRASIL, 2008) and establishes teacher interaction in a maximum of 2/3 (two thirds) of their workload with students, assigning 1/3 of the work day to activities outside the classroom, without the presence of students. Thus, by not guaranteeing this right, the education of teachers remains within the scope of the effort and individual initiative of the teacher.

The third aspect linked to the Continuing Education Guidelines refers to the explicit intention of combating, on a theoretical level, the liberal ideologies, defending a collective work for the professional development. Although the document is intended to promote a broad discussion on the CTE, there are many challenges to be faced related to the contradictions that exist in the Municipal Government, for example, in the formation of public-private partnerships.

Courses and groups of education of teachers proposed by the municipal department

Analyzing the offer of courses and groups of education of teachers provided by MDE (study, work and educational groups) between the years 2010 and 2014, we note that they are offered to teachers through lists published in Official Diary (OD). In the period studied, the MDE offered 361 courses to final years teachers. The provision of such courses follows the orientation of the Continuing Education Guidelines, which highlight some priority areas for studies, such as education fundamentals, pedagogical practices, languages, evaluation, methodology and innovation.

Considering the methodological contributions of Bogdan and Biklen (1994) and André (1984), such topics were listed in a spreadsheet whose recurrent reading of the menu suggested a form of categorization evidencing the tendencies of offering, which were organized in 11 (eleven) axes thematic areas: 1) Special Education; 2) Media, Communication and Technology; 3) Sexuality, Gender and Ethnic-Racial Relations; 4) Art and Culture; 5) Languages; 6) Theoretical-practical reference of the Curricular Components and Youth and Adult Education; 7) Environment; 8) Health and Citizenship; 9) Reading, Writing and Pedagogical Work; 10) Integral Education; and, 11) Relationships, Coping with Conflicts and Values.

It was possible to verify that most of the mentioned topics remained recurrent throughout the five years. However, starting in 2013, we noticed the appearance of courses and groups on Integral Education and Relationships, Coping with Conflicts and Values. We note a wide variety of issues, in addition to the emergence of others, which indicates new concerns of the municipal government, for example, comply with Decree No. 7,083, January 27, 2010, which requires municipalities to gradually provide integral education (BRASIL, 2010).

Finally, we present some expectations: Do the topics offered by MDE meet the demands of teachers and the EU? Despite the large number of courses, do teachers participate

in CTE? Are the decisions made based on a dialogue between the Continuing Teachers Education Center and the EU? Do the courses impact on teaching work? We understand that the articulation of the analysis of documents and interviews was fundamental to find some answers or new questions. These questions guided the analytical process and provided the basis for the construction of the nuclei of meaning presented below.

The nuclei of meaning

As discussed in the introduction to this article, based on empirical material, we will discuss three elaborate nuclei of meaning.

The understanding of the continuing teachers education and the role of each involved

It will be discussed the conceptions of CTE expressed by the research participants and their influence on the development of teaching and more specific functions, such as orientation, coordination and direction.

In general, both EC and PC understand that CTE should be permanent. However, while the EC refers exclusively to the conception of CTE, the statements of the interviewed PC understand the CTE in a way related to the needs of the EU:

I understand by continuing education all the training that is done when leaving college. From initial training and starting the job you must continue studying, then all this continuous study that comes after initial training is continuing education and I understand it as endless, there is no limit [...] (EC 1).

[...] it is a perennial action. From the moment we complete graduation while the professional education teachers we are [...] (EC 2).

Four of the five interviewed PC refer to the CTE as a continuous study that should involve practical issues with the school and the classroom as a purpose:

What I understand by continuing education is the aim that we have almost daily. Even the needs within the school, and the practices are leading, pointing some needs, and in education this is very common, this is very easy to visualize, we are always talking, we are always changing, and one is helping the other, until we get what we want to perfect, where we want to continue studying. So, I think it's a day to day need (PC 2).

Continuing teachers' education, for me, is a study that you do within your own work, involving your own activities, it has no value if it is quite theoretical is well connected to the action of the teacher in the classroom (PC 5).

We note that these demands for a more pragmatic CTE are much more related to the urgency of solving everyday school problems than to a theoretical-methodological option, as suggested by Schön (2000) when discusses on an epistemology of practice.

This type of discourse is not the privilege of certain teachers, but rather of those in positions of trust with political relevance. One of the counselors, when asked about the importance of the CTE for the MDE, states:

You see! This year [2014] we have had more than 100 continuing education actions [courses and training groups] by the Education Center. By this number you can see the importance that this policy has for us of the municipal network (EC 2).

Despite the effort of the MDE to offer a significant number of courses, from 36 courses in 2013 to 83 in 2014, in order to meet the different needs of teachers in a large city, we understand that this EC works with the conception that the relevance of the CTE is in the quantity of trainings.

PC 1, when asked about its point of view, explains that “it is a policy, it has very good choices”, referring to the great number of courses offered by the public power, but questioning whether the main objective is in fact the CTE or if it is only a demonstration that much is done by education. This questioning is based on the number of teachers who participate, that is effectively small.

7

There are only a few [who participate in the CTE], we have made a list to put in the PPP [Pedagogical Political Project], teacher by teacher. We asked them, “Are you in a continuing education? Which course are you doing? And, if they could not be studying, why?” Thus, 70% replied: “I am not due to the accumulation”. Understood? [...] Most [teachers] are working in another school and do not have the minimum time for them to be in school and what they have of Teaching for Classroom Development is the minimum time for correction of tests (PC 5).

Older teachers have this pedagogical time, the Pedagogical Hours which still allows and helps a little, but the new [teachers] do not. Attachments also do not, so it is not enough because if it works in two units it is several things you have (PC 3).

On the other hand, we have an example of PC that considers the quantitative factor significant: “we have many courses offered. So here [in the city], we have a network that looks a lot at this issue” (PC 2).

We consider that as an educational policy the issue of the great offer of CTE is necessary and important, but we do not believe that it is enough as a finality. Educational policies should also invest in other mechanisms that enable greater participation and involvement of teachers.

Regardless of the alleged divergences between CTE conceptions, MDE representatives and PC, it is interesting to note that the PC understand their role as mediators in the indication of the courses disseminated in the OD.

In an interview with these professionals, when asked about their role in relation to the CTE, four of the five interviewees emphasized their role of encouraging, indicating courses or merely informing about the publication of the list of courses in the OD.

We suspect that this difficulty in understanding the formative role is linked to three main factors: the lack of clarity in the norms about their formative role; the relative delay in defining the Continuing Education Guidelines and the lack of education for the PC that subsidizes the CTE.

Noting the lack of understanding of the normative documents referring to the attributions of PC, we point out that there is a 2007 Municipal Law that explains the role of PC, but we infer that it is necessary to include in these normative documents, as well as in the school regiment, references to the Law 2007, as a means of redeeming and circulating more frequently the attributions of the PC, including the formative character. In the mentioned Law, the PC has an important role in the conduction of the CTE:

To be responsible for the organization and orientation of the educational team so that it can fulfill the task of teaching the contents registered in the school plan/pedagogical project, periodically evaluating and reorganizing the pedagogical work; to be jointly responsible for planning and evaluating the pedagogical activities carried out by the educational team, with a view to autonomy and comprehensive student education; to be responsible for the planning, preparation, systematization, implementation and evaluation of the pedagogical project; to promote and coordinate periodic pedagogical meetings with professionals of the educational unit, including those related to institutional evaluation, considering the implementation of the educational policies of the MDE; to plan, coordinate, implement and evaluate seminars, study groups, lectures, workshops and other activities to improve the pedagogical praxis of professionals in the educational unit; to execute, monitor and evaluate the actions foreseen in the school plan/pedagogical project to improve educational indicators; to accompany the teaching plan of the teachers offering subsidies for the improvement of the teaching/learning process, with special attention to the results of the student evaluation; to continually seek the advice of the MDE pedagogical coordinators, keeping in mind the objectives recorded in the school plan / pedagogical project and the educational guidelines of the MDE (DIÁRIO OFICIAL MUNICIPAL)ⁱⁱ.

The interviews with the PC indicated that the lack of quality specialist education contributes to their not recognizing themselves as educators. In addition, there is no denying the need for minimum objective conditions that would allow the PC to work on CTE, as more collective pedagogical times.

On the other hand, it is feasible to infer, through the interviews, that such indefiniteness is related to the lack of a Continuing Education Guidelines resulting from a State policy.

The non-completion of the guidelines document for teachers education since 2010 has been interpreted differently by the counselors interviewed. This inconclusion is related to the great turnover of people occupying positions of leadership, fundamental in the policy of CTE. EC 1 reports:

I think that on account of the change of government, the first in 2010, changed the government and not over. The next government had an interest [to continue producing the document] [...] but then the [Education] secretary became ill [...] and then the commission disappeared and no one else continued (EC 1).

The EC 2, while defending the importance of developing guidelines for teachers education, considers that the city has already structured a consolidated policy and, therefore, independent of the party that is the front of the government:

It is configured as a State policy, not as a government policy, so the political parties, the administrations that go in to take care of the public administration of the

municipality incorporate this because of the importance that this policy has for the city [...] and is constituted, is not it? It is already constituted (EC 2).

Certainly, the inconstancy of the people in the strategic posts for CTE also contributes to the slowness in these processes, but there is evidence, in the empirical material produced, that some aspects related to the CTE politics are consolidated. We note, however, that the delay in completing the document on the Continuing Education Guidelines also relates to issues that are still difficult to resolve, such as conflicts of interest among education professionals within the education system. While the MDE Committee suggests that it is necessary to overcome some objective conditions, such as keeping the education professional on an exclusive basis for an EU and expanding the Collective Teacher Work (CTW) at school, education professionals have repudiated such proposals in relation to the way in which they were fixed.

We noticed that the teachers themselves did not accept to remain in a single EU and denied the extension of the CTW (activity planning moment, but also of continuing education), which apparently would benefit them. This is because there are teachers who have worked for years in other networks, public and/or private, and thus would have to leave one of them. Similarly, expanding the hours of CTW (beyond its 02h/class) could damage teachers who teach in other EU, because could be scheduling conflicts or exceeding the allowable weekly workload. It should be noted that these same teachers who work in more than one EU have made such a choice in the past because of the wage devaluation suffered by the category for decades. Therefore, if the teachers have accumulation of positions, they will have less or no time to invest in their continuing education.

We note, therefore, that changes in government, people, and conflicts of interest alter CTE directions, hence the unclear roles of those involved and the lack of clarity reported by PC.

However, based on the interviews with the PC, we understand that the definitions of courses and groups should not be carried out “from top to bottom”, without the participation of the EU. The PC affirmed the inexistence of this conversation between the MDE and the schools:

We realize that sometimes there are courses that arrive with inappropriate time, sometimes with inappropriate menus. And if it was more discussed [the definitions of the courses] I think it would be more profitable, talk what you expect, what you seek. [...] this conversation is not done at any moment, nor with us in counseling (PC 4).

PC 4 also adds that “it is more than a research they do”, referring to a quick consultation with a small group linked to the Education Center. Therefore, a greater dialogue is needed between the MDE and the EU, as we will discuss below.

Dialogue between school and MDE: organization of the courses, offering and working day

How is the relationship between the MDE and the EU relate to the CTE? From the point of view of the PC, it is necessary to review the definitions criteria of the continuing education:

We ask who defines this continuing education. There are some courses that, not that are not interesting, but within the context of the network, is it important to do a circular dance course? You know, sometimes we ask where did that need come from? (PC 1).

If, on the one hand, PC 1 can demonstrate a pragmatic vision insofar as it imagines that the continuing education should have a direct relation with the practice of the teacher, on the other, for such PC, it is difficult to understand the criteria of choice of the courses' topics. The unfinished document of the Continuing Education Guidelines indicates that the CTE in the city is

10

Studies and implementation of the various languages that comprise the human formation, with emphasis in the field of Literature, Arts, Communication and Technologies considering the literacy in the multiple languages central aspect to be fomented in the varied formative modalities (FUNDAMENTOS E DIRETRIZESⁱⁱⁱ).

We infer that, while there is the defense of a human formation as the basis for the guiding principles of planning and selection of the courses, such a criterion should be discussed and made explicit. We observe that there is a risk of understanding the offer of continuing education dissociated from the practice, which leads to its valorization to the detriment of the theory (SAVIANI, 2008; GATTI, 2008). Likewise, the risk of leaving human formation aside brings strong impediments to the dialectical movement of reflection, which enables transformations (SCALCON, 2008). If there are no urgent and necessary definitions regarding: (i) the contemplating and composition of the working day; (ii) clear regulation of paid leave for the continuing education; (iii) the provision of continuing education together with the process of class selection; and (iv) the exclusive dedication regime, the challenges for the construction of a policy for continuing education will still be great.

According to EC 1, the demands on the definitions of courses offered come from a link between the PC and the EC, considering the national discussions, the demands of the MDE and the implementation of the Municipal Curriculum Guidelines.

When asked if the Education Center consults the Political Pedagogical Projects (PPP) to verify the demands of the EU, the EC 1 states that

It should be consulted, do not say that is happening. As people know the PPP, the EC and in this relationship with the PC, then we have this facility, but I will not tell you that it is a guideline to consult the PPP, is not it, go there and consult, it is more articulation with PC (EC 1).

We must recognize that the CTE, because of its specificity in meeting the contemporary trends of constant updating, must change according to the needs of a certain historical time (GATTI, 2008). However, what we notice is that such changes and/or permanences occur centrally and without the participation of teachers and PC. Although EC 1 states that there is a link with PC in the CTE definitions, the PC interviewed state that they are not covered in such a process: “We are never called to seek, to think along the formation. It would be interesting as a pedagogical guide, because we are inside the school and are seeing what is really lacking” (PC 1).

However, it is undeniable that these dialogues between the MDE and the EU are interfered with by the organizational structure of this current educational network, which makes it impossible for more consistent participation of teachers and PC. This relationship is recognized by the MDE itself in the speech of EC 2, stating that there is “the need to put the moment of continuing education on the teacher's working day, since [...] many of them have to have more than one working day in other institutions [...]” (EC 2).

This statement is in line with the statement of PC 5, revealing that about 70% of its teachers work in another EU, making it difficult to participate in courses.

On the other hand, for EC 1, the lack of participation of continuing education is related to other factors. This indicates that, for this MDE representative, the responsibility for non-participation still rests with the EU and the teachers themselves. Thus, we observe that there is no agreement between the two main representatives of the MDE as to the factors that prevent the participation of most teachers in the formations offered by the MDE.

This is most evident when EC 2 admits that, in compliance with the Salary Law, there is a need to assert Article 4, Law 11,738/2008, which highlights that the maximum work of the teachers is 2/3 with activities involving students (BRASIL, 2008).

Until the end of this investigation, the MDE complies with Article 4 of the Law only for the five schools of integral education. The teachers of the other EU are on the margins of this new working day, which prevents the massive presence in the CTE moments, despite the certification and remuneration of the continuing education.

Influences of the continuing teachers education in the school and in the teaching practice: needs and changes

How to deal with the effects of CTE in teaching practice? Undoubtedly, it is necessary to indicate the conditions to which the teachers of the city are submitted. In the interviews with the PC and one of the EC, we realized that the lack of time of the teachers is one of the biggest problems that affect their achievement or quality. It is no coincidence that EC 1 recognizes the low participation of teachers (although remunerated), stating that “we are attending today [August 2014] 50% of teachers”.

In addition to the difficulties related to teacher time, PC did not observe significant changes in pedagogical practices and in the EU. The statements of the PC indicate that there

are teachers who participate merely to acquire certificates and, consequently, to obtain financial benefits foreseen in the job plans, that sometimes do not observe changes in the didactics of the classes, not counting the difficulty in socializing the new knowledge learned with their peers, due to the lack of pedagogical time:

We do not always see this return [of the continuing education], [...] it is very difficult, the teacher who is going to take a course in mathematics to come and work in relation to what he is discussing. It cannot [see a return of CTE] even more that the school is prepared to give support to teachers to develop, unfortunately, it is up to some people talk, does because they have the certificate, know some benefit will bring, now the benefit of the return of the quality is somewhat harmed, we do not realize much that not (PC 1).

From the interviews with the PC, we observed that the continuing education in the city is little linked to the working day of the teachers, since the offer happens after the assignment of the classes. Therefore, teachers make their choices according to the availability of their schedule. We see that, in order to really meet the interests and needs of the teachers and the school, it would be important for the movement to be the reverse: first, the availability of the courses, and then the assignment of classes.

I think it takes a lot [the dissemination of offers], so first, the relationship what is offered, it does not match the beginning of the year, we are already in April and we do not have the list of courses offered by the network, did not come out in the Official Diary, so I think for teacher's organization it gets bad. And many interesting courses they are not offered, I think it must be offered in the three periods because today we know that the teacher splits into several units. [...] I think it must be disclosed before the teacher's assignment to better organize life in relation to quality [...] (PC 4).

In an individualistic perspective of continuing education, we emphasize that both the diversity of courses offered and the search and personal involvement of the teacher lead to a formative process with little articulation with effective changes within the schools. If the continuing education do not aggregate the school's collective, there will be eminent risks of fragile contributions to change. According to Davis *et al.* (2011, p. 830) the individualistic model aims to

overcome the problems left by initial training. This approach focuses mainly on the characteristics that teachers lack and is therefore called the "deficit approach". This model assumes that teachers have little or nothing to say about how to improve their education, which is why they cannot be consulted on this issue. The CTE is therefore defined in other instances and/or by higher hierarchical levels of education systems, disregarding the specifics of teachers and their workplaces. They are uniform proposals, in the format "single size" and "unisex", whose goal is to reach all teachers, regardless of their age, length of experience, taught discipline and interests.

A CTE based on individualism is evident in the extent to which the MDE defines offers without articulation with teachers and PC. Therefore, the continuing education are available to all teachers, but do not necessarily meet their real demands, as well as the demands of the EU. From the point of view of the MDE and the large number of courses, it is up to the teachers to study to improve or remedy their lag in initial training, regardless of the actual possibility of the teachers being able to take such courses. This makes us suspect of a

silent neoliberal vision, in which, according to Lima (2007), both success and failure are under the responsibility of the individual, that is, the teacher and/or the EU itself. This becomes clearer when we ask PC about the impact of continuing education on teaching practice:

[The teacher] does the training, but then he does not replicate many times, I think it would be better to ask him, right? What is this difficulty in bringing into your own practice something you are discussing. This in many cases we see and say, “Look, the teacher goes out to address a certain issue”, but that does not change in his practice and often he may not be able to, but then he has the training to do so (PC 1).

I think it depends on each one. We have perceived good things in our unity, of teacher participating and bringing [contributions]. There are some teachers who socialize, but we realize that they have this need to bring something, but there are some that do not, so much goes from the teacher (PC 3).

We can observe that there is no consensus regarding the possibilities of returning to the EU and the collective of teachers, socializing the learning, the reflections and the propositions of the participating teachers. We consider this to be a major challenge: to build institutional mechanisms to involve teachers in a collective way, in order to discuss and reflect on what each teacher experienced in the continuing education. We believe that this is a way to strengthen the school as a space of formation, where we experience, collectively, the movement of reflection that can promote change.

It is important to highlight that, in the CTE policy of the city, there are different modalities offered. Although the greater amount is of short courses, there is a modality called Continuing Education Groups (CEG)^{iv}. PC report that CTE in collectives is more significant than fragmented and punctual. For them, the CEG provide the meeting of different teachers and, collectively, discuss common problems and socialize experiences.

Despite praise from the CEG, they are depleted because of the impossibilities of teachers to participate. We believe that the teachers should have the right to continue studying for their specific needs at the personal level (NÓVOA, 1992). However, corroborating Moreto (2009), we believe that these formations should be less punctual as a continuum of actions, bearing marks of human culture and social practice and meeting the needs of the EU collective.

In summary, the scenario in the analyzed city, according to the PC, is a fragile relationship between CTE and changes in teaching practices and in the EU.

The guiding principles and the substations (in)coherence between the MDE speech and the school practice

Seeking to reflect on the constitution and guiding principles of continuing education and the supposed (in)coherences between the MDE discourse and the EU practice from the point of view of the PC in the city, we have dialogued with some researchers that approach different views about the CTE.

Vogt and Morosini (2012) show us the importance of CTE in school space. Other researchers, such as Araújo and Silva (2009) and Davis *et al.* (2011), assert that the CTE in the city has been assuming antagonistic perspectives: liberal-conservative and critical-reflexive; individualized and collaborative.

For Araújo and Silva (2009), the liberal-conservative continuing education refers to the updating of teachers through information or skills acquired in courses, workshops, seminars and others. In this context, the teacher has a secondary role in the process, it reproduces what was thought by specialists. On the other hand, in the critical-reflexive tendency, the teachers assume a centrality in their continuing education process, that is, their formation does not depend exclusively on courses, but on their own choices, often articulated with them in the EU. In this case, the teachers aim an autonomy through a critical-reflexive practice in their daily work (ARAÚJO; SILVA, 2009).

Likewise, according to Davis *et al.* (2011), from the point of view of individualized education, actions focus on the teachers in order to repair the failures of initial training. On the other hand, the collaborative view values the group of teachers and defends the continuing education occurring within the EU.

From our point of view, the concept of continuing education is articulated with the modalities that it assumes in its different offerings, which, in turn, will give opportunities for dialogue and reflection on the part of teachers. According to the provisions of the Continuing Education Guidelines of the city, we have identified the offer of two educational modalities: continuous education with periodic integral release, which includes participation in different courses outside the EU, issuing an opinion together with the regional representation and in accordance with the education policy of the municipality; and continuing education on the job, which requires joint advice from the bodies involved, such as study groups in schools, courses at the Center of Education, and technical-scientific events.

From these theories and the empirical data, we observe that in the network there is a coexistence of models of education, but with emphasis on the individualized courses and of short duration. This makes us infer about the existence of a stronger relationship with the liberal-conservative and individualized tendency insofar as the numerous courses show a concern with the provision of information and instrumentalization of its teachers.

Between the years of 2010 and 2014, more than 70 (seventy) courses were offered on average per year. One of the EC interviewed points out that the relevance of the CTE to the MDE is in the high number of courses offered. We recognize that such prominence can mean the valorization of large actions aimed at continuing education, with the intention of offering several options of choice for teachers. On the other hand, it is important to alert that the number of courses is an aspect to be accompanied by quality regulatory mechanisms, in line with the demands of the educational network and the EU.

In spite of these formations of individual character – in which each teacher chooses the course that wishes – and counting on a great variety of courses made available by the MDE, aiming to attend to the presumed “lags” of each teacher, what is in fact in that network

are formations of interest to the MDE that do not necessarily match the visions and needs of the EU and teachers.

We cannot deny a certain movement of the CTE policy of this MDE towards critical-reflexive and collaborative tendencies, for example, CEG, Study and Working Groups. In these groups, especially in the CEG, teachers have more autonomy about propositions compared to other courses characterized by being more prescriptive. According to the view of the PC, the CEG are modalities that allow the teacher the possibility of meeting others in their curricular area and, in this way, exchanging experiences related to their areas of activity, presupposing a greater relation with the practices within the EU. These groups converge with the ideas of Araújo and Silva (2009) when they affirm that the teachers should be the protagonists of their own formation and, in this case, they should be encouraged to appropriate the knowledge towards autonomy.

The diversity of individualized and collaborative studies of this municipal network corroborates the point of view of Davis *et al.* (2011), which suggest just mixtures. However, it is necessary to question what the conditions for teachers are to participate in these studies and whether they meet the demands of teachers and the EU. It is not enough to have different modalities, becoming just formations of appearances or, as one of the PC says, “a beautiful showcase”, if there is no opportunity for more effective conditions for greater involvement and engagement of teachers.

As mentioned, there is a tendency for the continuing education analyzed to occur in school spaces. According to Vogt and Morosini (2012), this tendency points to the importance of the role of the EC. However, according to the PC participating in the research, there are no adequate conditions for them to take on the role of trainers, either due to lack of pedagogical time or lack of training. However, PC should not be solely responsible for the CTE.

The groups that take place in the EU assume a tendency of collaborative formation, constructing a space of dialogue and reflection involving the whole pedagogical team, constituting “communities of learning”, with a view to consolidating a constant process of continuing education.

The collaborative tendency of this municipal network occurs, more and more, from groups and in the interior of the EU, and may reveal an important approximation between the EU and the MDE. We can interpret, however, that this movement is a mere strategy of cut of expenses, since, in this case, would be used almost all the resources of the own school.

Although a collaborative formation in the EU uses its own resources, we note from the reports that it is necessary to invest in the composition of the working day of each of these professionals, so that there is, in fact, the possibility of dedication to the continuing process of education, expanding the pedagogical work for discussions, exchanges of experiences and reflection on these experiences and the knowledge that sustain them. We understand that this perspective makes it possible to strengthen the EU as a continuing education space. According to Tassoni and Megid (2015, p. 207), “it is only by strengthening the school as a space for the production of knowledge for both students and teachers that we can actually

believe in change”. Thus, thinking about CTE in this perspective does not match the idea of cost reduction. On the contrary, it is necessary to invest a lot in the school and the career of the teaching profession.

From the interviews with the PC and the analysis of the Continuing Education Guidelines, we note that the groups try to get closer to an epistemology of the practice, called by Schön (2000) as a critical-reflexive teacher, who emphasizes the movements of observation and reflection made by the teachers about and in their pedagogical practice, leading to the construction of knowledge based on experience.

Finally, identifying the supposed (in)coherences between the discourse of MDE and the EU practice in the investigated city, first, one must consider the undeniable movement by the MDE in order to consolidate a public policy of CTE in the through the production of the Continuing Education Guidelines that regulate the process. However, we see great challenges to be faced in this process, such as the teachers opposing stance towards exclusive dedication to a single EU and compulsory CTE. These divergences therefore contribute to the obstacle to the establishment of a policy of continuing education that favors all concerned and contributes to improving the quality of teaching and learning in the EU.

There is no denying the progress of continuing education in the city with remuneration of studies and with different and numerous offers of courses and groups – not counting possible waivers of teachers to participate in different types of studies. However, in our understanding, this way has been slow and with little participation of teachers and PC. Not coincidentally, in the interviews the PC reported not being clear about the process of choosing the topics and the demands of the courses/groups. There are researchers who point out that the identification and analysis of these education needs are crucial to act in a coherent way with the reality that demands (GALINDO; INFORSATO, 2008).

The inconsistencies may be related to the failure to complete the document on the Continuing Education Guidelines. The delays in finalizing this document reveal, as one of the interviewed EC points out, a clear link with party politics, reflected in the exchange of people in strategic leadership positions for the CTE, which, in the view of some PC, has been a hindrance to improve the CTE policy. Thus, we assert that, from the data analysis, this lack of definition regarding the materialization of this policy leads to a lack of clarity regarding the role of the PC in the CTE, making it impossible to work more consistently with the teachers.

This shows us how far the PC are from recognizing themselves as trainers in the school space, because they also lack the pedagogical conditions of time with the collective of teachers. We understand that the lack of time is, in part, a reflection of the municipality’s failure to comply with the Law. If, on the one hand, we see some efforts by the MDE to build a CTE policy, on the other, we notice a shyness regarding the central issue, that is, the inclusion of study time in the workday of teachers. We believe that resolving this point over time would allow incoming teachers in this network to opt for longer studies instead of incorporating more classes into their weekly workload.

We know that the CTE and the models adopted will not change a complex reality with several actors involved (ARAÚJO; SILVA, 2009). However, the CTE, together with other

factors, has a considerable relevance in educational changes, so it has been the target of much academic research (ARAÚJO; SILVA, 2009; DAVIS *et al.*, 2011; VOGT; MOROSINI, 2012; TASSONI; MEGID, 2015).

Education actions need to be considered as requiring evaluation and reassessment in order to ascertain the extent to which they approach the demands of changing realities.

Considerations

The research presented made it possible to problematize the educational policies and their resulting models. The appreciation of continuing education and the State's investment in prioritizing light and punctual studies have not positively impacted the practice of teachers within the EU, according to the interviewed PC.

The CTE policy of the city, which provides a large amount of individualized process, also offers the CEG modality – a collective process that enables more meaningful exchanges among teachers. In such groups, teachers from the same area can discuss Curriculum Guidelines and socialize practice experiences. The research evidenced that this type of education can promote greater reflection and autonomy to the teachers.

Regardless of this trend, it is necessary to guarantee the minimum conditions for public school teachers to be more and more involved with the CTE proposals offered by the MDE.

References

AGUIAR, Wanda Maria Junqueira de; OZELLA, Sergio. Apreensão dos sentidos: aprimorando a proposta dos núcleos de significação. **Revista Brasileira de Estudos Pedagógicos**. Brasília, v. 94, n. 236, p. 299-322, jan./abr. 2013.

ANDRÉ, Marli Eliza Dalmazo Afonso de. Estudo de Caso: seu potencial na educação. **Cadernos de Pesquisa**. São Paulo, n. 49, p. 51-54, maio 1984.

ARAÚJO, Clarissa Martins de; SILVA, Everson Melquíades da. Formação continuada de professores: tendências emergentes na década de 1990. **Educação**. Porto Alegre, v. 32, n. 3, p. 326-330, set./dez. 2009.

BOGDAN, Robert; BIKLEN, Sari. **Investigação qualitativa em educação**. Porto: Porto Editora, 1994.

BRASIL. Ministério da Educação. **Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional**. Lei nº 9.394, de 20 de dezembro de 1996. Diário Oficial da União, Brasília, DF, 23 de dezembro de 1996.

BRASIL. **Lei nº 11.738**, de 16 de julho de 2008. Disposições Constitucionais Transitórias, para instituir o piso salarial profissional nacional para os profissionais do magistério público da educação básica. Presidência da República. Brasília: DF, 2008.

BRASIL. **Decreto nº 7083**, de 27 de janeiro de 2010. Disposições sobre o Programa Mais Educação. Presidência da República. Brasília: DF, 2010.

DAVIS, Claudia Leme Ferreira *et al.* Formação continuada de professores em alguns estados e municípios do Brasil. **Cadernos de Pesquisa**. São Paulo, v. 41, n. 144, p. 826-849, set./dez. 2011.

GALINDO, Camila José; INFORSATO, Edson do Carmo. Formação continuada errática e necessidades de formação docente: resultados de um levantamento de dados em municípios paulistas. **Interacções**. Portugal, n. 9, p. 80-96, 2008.

GATTI, Bernadete Angelina. Análise das políticas públicas para formação continuada no Brasil, na última década. **Revista Brasileira de Educação**. Rio de Janeiro, v. 13, n. 37, p. 57-70, jan./abr. 2008.

18

LIMA, Marcio Javan Camelo de. Neoliberalismo e educação. **Studia Diversa**, CCAE-UFPB, v. 1, n. 1, p. 44-61, out. 2007.

MAUÉS, Olgaíses Cabral. Reformas internacionais da educação e formação de professores. **Cadernos de Pesquisa**. São Paulo, n. 118, p. 89-117, mar. 2003.

MORETO, Julio Antonio. **Formação continuada de professores: dos (des) caminhos dos órgãos colegiados de participação, às instâncias de gestão das políticas públicas**. 2009. 314 f. Tese (Doutorado em Educação). Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Faculdade de Educação, Campinas, SP, 2009.

NÓVOA, António. Formação de professores e profissão docente. *In*: NÓVOA, António (coord.). **Os professores e a sua formação**. Lisboa: Publicações Dom Quixote, 1992. p. 13-33.

SAVIANI, Dermeval. **História das ideias pedagógicas no Brasil**. Campinas: Autores Associados, 2008.

SCALCON, Suze. O pragmatismo e o trabalho docente profissionalizado. **Perspectiva**. Florianópolis, v. 26, n. 2, p. 489-521, jul./dez. 2008.

SCHÖN, Donald A. **Educando o profissional reflexivo: um novo design para o ensino e a aprendizagem**. Tradução de Roberto Cataldo Costa. Porto Alegre: Artmed, 2000.

TASSONI, Elvira Cristina Martins; MEGID, Maria Auxiliadora Bueno Andrade. A formação de professores alfabetizadores e o Programa Ler e Escrever. **ETD - Educação Temática Digital**. Campinas, v. 17, n. 1, p. 193-210, jan./abr. 2015.

VOGT, Grasiela Zimmer; MOROSINI, Marília Costa. Formação continuada de professores e reunião pedagógica: construindo um estado de conhecimento. **Reflexão e Ação**. Santa Cruz, V. 20, n. 1, p. 24-37, jan./jun. 2012.

Notes

- ⁱ The research presented in this article was funded by CAPES [Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel].
- ⁱⁱ The references from the Official Diary of the Municipality, as well as of the mentioned Law will not be presented, aiming to preserve the identity of the investigated city and the participants of the research.
- ⁱⁱⁱ The reference from this document will not be presented, aiming to preserve the identity of the investigated city and the participants of the research.
- ^{iv} The so-called Training Groups, a modality in which teachers from the same curricular area meet and discuss curriculum and methodologies.

