

## Learning, professional development and teacher personality: contributions of the historic-cultural approach

*Aprendizagem, desenvolvimento profissional e personalidade docente:  
contribuições do enfoque histórico-cultural*

*Aprendizaje, desarrollo profesional y personalidad del profesor:  
contribuciones del enfoque histórico-cultural*

Isauro Núñez Beltrán<sup>2</sup> 

Betania Leite Ramalho<sup>3</sup> 

**Abstract:** In this article, we propose a fresh reading of the categories learning and professional development of teachers in the context of continuing education under the Historical-Cultural Approach in order to show its potential as an integrative perspective. Taking the personality of the teacher as a structuring category, we analyze learning as a personality activity for the creative appropriation of the professional culture that contributes to teacher development, so that these categories are understood as part of a complex and dialectical system. In this system, these categories are integrated and explained with the help of others, such as social situation of development and lived experience (*perezhivanie*), in order to consider teacher learning and professional development as personality phenomena, in a dialectical relationship that integrates the affective and cognitive dimensions in the socio-historical context of the profession.

**Keywords:** Learning. Professional development. Historic-cultural approach.

**Resumo:** Neste artigo, propõe-se uma releitura das categorias aprendizagem e desenvolvimento profissional de professores no contexto da formação continuada sob o Enfoque Histórico-Cultural a fim de se mostrar as potencialidades do mesmo como uma perspectiva integradora. Tomando a personalidade do professor como categoria estruturante, analisa-se a aprendizagem como uma atividade da personalidade para a apropriação criativa da cultura profissional que tributa para o desenvolvimento docente, de modo que essas categorias sejam compreendidas como partes de um sistema complexo e dialético. Nesse sistema, estas se integram e se explicam com auxílio de outras categorias, como situação social de desenvolvimento e vivência, de forma a se considerar a aprendizagem docente e o desenvolvimento profissional como fenômenos da personalidade, em uma dialética que integra as dimensões afetivas e cognitivas no contexto sócio-histórico da profissão.

**Palavras-chave:** Aprendizagem. Desenvolvimento profissional. Enfoque histórico-cultural.

**Resumen:** En este artículo se propone una relectura de las categorías aprendizaje y desarrollo profesional de profesores en el contexto de la formación continuada fundamentado en el Enfoque Histórico-Cultural, con el propósito de se mostrar las potencialidades del mismo como una perspectiva integradora. Tomando la personalidad del profesor como una categoría estructurante, el aprendizaje se analiza como una actividad de la personalidad para la apropiación creativa de la cultura profesional que contribuye al desarrollo profesional, a fin de comprenderlos como parte de un sistema dialéctico y complejo que se integran y explican con la ayuda de categorías como la de situación social de desarrollo y la de vivencia, para considerar el aprendizaje del profesorado y el desarrollo profesional como fenómenos de la personalidad en una dialéctica que integra las dimensiones afectivas y cognitivas en el contexto sociohistórico de la profesión.

**Palabras clave:** Aprendizaje. Desarrollo profesional. Enfoque histórico-cultural.

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<sup>2</sup> Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (UFRN) – Email: isaurobeltran@yahoo.com.br

<sup>3</sup> Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (UFRN) – Email: betania.ramalho.edu@gmail.com

## Introduction

In Brazil, the problem about the quality of education has propelled a considerable production of studies about teachers and their initial and continuous formation, reaching the consolidation of a research field, with a certain identity, as a scientific discipline. Many studies have focused attention, among other aspects, on the dimension of teacher professionalization; in the thinking and practice of teachers related to the issues of learning, knowledge and skills as dimensions of teaching professionalism; and in professionalism linked to the conditions of the exercise of professional activity and the professional development of teachers. These themes are present in a growing number of researches, always associated with discussions about initial or continuing education (RAMALHO; NÚÑEZ; GAUTHIER, 2004).

There is some discursive consensus and quite widespread rhetoric about the importance of teachers and teacher formation, but we note a theoretical and even semantic dispersion about the categories of teaching-learning, teacher formation and their professional development, as pointed out studies by Ramalho and Núñez (2019). On this argumentative basis, the authors call the attention to the difficulty of clearly distinguishing what is a study on formation, learning or professional development, key categories of the teaching profession. Little is generally revealed about what should be a study about teaching learning, about teacher formation, about his or her professional development and how these dimensions relate to each other, as parts of a complex and systemic totality. Even so, we observe that these categories are used as synonyms, which reduces one category to another and can produce an opposite effect, a “conceptual error” and, consequently, impact the theoretical and methodological dimensions of research.

In the tradition of learning and development studies, the relationships of complexity between these categories have generally been ignored. Learning and development are studied as separate processes. There have been few debates that explain how teacher learning contributes to the development of his personality as a complex system that integrates the dimensions of affectivity and cognition. This situation is revealed in the scarce publications on the subject, in Brazil and also internationally, as warned by Fariñas (2004), De La Rosa (2017) and Ramalho and Núñez (2019). Therefore, it is important to advance in the search for theoretical reflections that meet the requirements of a complex and integrated view of teachers' learning and professional development in the context of their continuing education, the theme discussed in this text.

In this sense, this article seeks to call attention to the possibilities and potential of the Historical-Cultural Approach (HCA), initiated by L. S. Vigotsky. We search to understand teacher formation from an integral point of view, as a context of learning and professional development, avoiding reducing it to one or another dimension, as it has usually been observed. This understanding requires an effort and a deconstruction for another perspective of approach and research on the continuing formation of the teacher, as a way and context of learning that enhances professional development: taking the teacher as a person. This approach does not exclude one or another sphere of the teacher's life, but integrates them and

conceives him or her as a unique being, a social, historical person, who has different experiences in social situations in which contradictions of different natures mobilize and reconfigure his or her personality. In this approach, affectivity, desires, motivations and needs condition and guide their existence not only as a professional, but as a human being belonging to a given society, in a characteristic historical and social period.

In view of the complexity of the problem presented, this article has the purpose to reflect on the possibilities of the HCA to contribute to think, create and recreate a theoretical body under an integrated view (and not only related to) of teacher's learning and professional development in the context of formal spaces of continuing formation.

### **Teacher learning and professional development: possible contributions of the Historical-Cultural Approach (HCA)**

As foundations of teacher learning, we sought a theoretical framework supported by the contributions of the Historical-Culturalist Approach (HCA), founded by L. S. Vigotsky, in which stand out relevant theoretical contributions, such as those of A. N. Leontiev (1985), P. Ya. Galperin, N. F. Talízina, V. V. Davidov (1998), L. Bozhovich, among others. This approach is a heuristic tool necessary to understand the dynamics and complexity of this process. It also establishes a theoretical, methodological and practical foundation for planning, directing and developing teachers' learning activities in the context of continuing formation, considered as a developmental learning, that is, enhancing professional development as a personality dimension of teachers.

The concept of learning at HCA was discussed by Vigotsky, Leontiev, Galperin, among others. In all cases, we recognize the dialectic of the relationship between learning and personality development of the learning person, as emphasized by Vigotsky (1987), in the sense that good learning drives this development. In this sense, it is relevant to understand that structured learning, in pedagogical conditions in formation, is not equivalent to professional development.

According to Ramalho and Núñez (2019), a recontextualized discussion of the ideas of the HCA in the case of teachers' learning and professional development, in situations of continuing formation, leads to a dialogue between these categories and personality. This discussion is relevant since, in HCA, learning finds itself in personality development, as one of the most complex and dynamic phenomena of human beings. Still, from the perspective of HCA, the development that learning enhances refers to the development of personality, which is effective by good teaching. Moreover, in Fariñas (2005) opinion, in order to understand learning as a complex phenomenon, it is a necessary condition to approach it under its higher organization level: which is the personality. For this author, any question about development leads to learning, since it is a key to human activity that leads to personality development.

### *About the personality at HCA*

At HCA, several authors have dealt with the personality issue under the same philosophical assumptions, among them Vigotsky (1987), Leontiev (1985), Rubinstein (1983) and Petrovski (1979). Although these authors did not have developed a theory of personality, they made very important contributions to the understanding of this category within that focus.

Under this focus, in general, personality is understood as the superior system of the human psyche that constitutes an integrating and self-regulating whole of the affective and cognitive elements that operate in the person, which is a unique and unrepeatable configuration of each person (FARIÑAS, 2005). González *et al.* (2000, p. 52) define personality as: “A system of psychological formations of different degrees of complexity that constitute the upper regulatory level of the activity of the individual”. We highlight that, for the authors, the term **individual** refers to the integrity and particularity of a concrete person that manifests him or herself from the early life stages, in the qualities that differentiate him or her from others. Although man is an individual in his own kind, being a personality is not only adapting to and acting in the environment, but also actively and creatively influencing it, transforming it and, to the same extent, transforming himself as a result of the historical-cultural experience, with which we put ourselves in culture and in the system of social relations.

The main function of personality is to enable the person to self-regulate his or her behavior, mobilizing different psychological resources. Personality also has the role of orienting to the future, helping to think about life projects. Personality has several characteristics, including individuality, integrity and stability, and, in it, the essential function of regulation stands out. The regulatory function as a general characteristic of personality is carried out in a unique, inseparable manner, in the inducing and executing forms. In inductive regulation, we conceive the psychic phenomena that drive, direct and guide, as well as those that support the individual's action, such as: motivational orientation, which has the function of mobilizing the person to act; the motivational expectation that drives this action; and the state of satisfaction that sustains the person in acting. The performer regulation or instrumentalization refers to the manifestations of personal action in the form of conscious or not conscious instrumentalizations, translated into actions, operations, skills, habits and capacities, through which, in general, the person's instrumental functioning is performed.

When the two types of regulation, the inductor and the performer, form a solid conscious unity in the person, an adequate fullness of the affective with the cognitive is achieved. Thus, they enable a higher level of psyche regulation, since personality is characterized by a peculiar structuring of dynamic and dialectical relations between the inductor and the performer, as a premise and result of the concrete action of the person, as well as the structuring of relationships of the functional units that configure each of the regulating spheres.

With respect to personality, we must understand that it is a subjective and psychological reality in a way that it is not possible to appreciate it directly. It manifests itself

in conduct, behavior and verbal expressions, which also presupposes the active and mediated reflex, constructed of objective and subjective realities. This means that, in each person, individuality is reflected in its unique and time-created personality, as a complex, dynamic, in an ever-changing and developing configuration.

It is important to point out that, in these perspectives, personality does not represent the sum of parts organized in a static way, which express themselves in a linear way, in behaviors. Therefore, it is a category that must be understood as a complex whole not susceptible to fragmentation. Personality cannot be separated into smaller units because it constitutes a cell that contains the genesis of the development of a whole complex system, which is called the complex unit of analysis.

The singular and unrepeatable character of personality does not exclude it from the social relations in which it is formed and developed. Although each person experiences different conflicts, in different ways, considering the unique character of their psychological organization, the influence of the group and general patterns of social nature on personality configuration cannot be denied. Grounded in the philosophy of dialectical and historical materialism, personality, in its essence, is a process of social relations.

In this context, teaching as a profession is characterized by a given way of acting typical of this professional, which enters in the dynamic and complex composition of the social identity of the profession. The pedagogical professional identity is identified with the personality characteristics and conditions that typify the teaching professional and differentiates him or her from other professions by a sense of belonging to the teaching profession.

In the process of developing the personality of the teacher, changes occur that characterize higher levels of regulation and self-regulation of professional behavior, which implies better performance in the professional activity of educating students in the school context.

Along with the concept of personality, we should think of personality identity as a relatively stable psychological formation that has reached a certain level of development. This discussion, in turn, allows us to think about the concept of pedagogical professional identity as a factor to which learning must contribute. We share, in this bias, the understanding of De La Rosa (2017, p. 8), for whom the pedagogical professional identity is

[...] the intention of personality processes in the cognitive, affective, motivational and active value, which allows the establishment of affective relationships, feelings of belonging to the pedagogical profession, valuation of the appropriation of knowledge, professional skills and the making of teacher awareness in the identity process.

The pedagogical professional identity is revealed, in the context of the teacher's professional practice, as an objective dimension and, in relation to his self-perception as a professional, as a subjective dimension. This is a dialectical relationship that should not be reduced to one or the other of these dimensions. The teacher's perception of himself is important and what he or she does, and he or she is, in the life of which professional activity is a part, characterizes the teacher's pedagogical professional identity.

According to Petrovski (1979), the teacher's personality has a powerful influence on the development of students' intelligence, feelings and will, which resides in the very nature of man and in the human relations that are established in the process of pedagogical activity. For the author, the teacher's professional activity is very complex due to its psychological content, which demands deep mastery of knowledge, a general culture, attitudes and values, creativity and professional responsibility in the sphere of his life and, especially, in the professional and pedagogical orientations that relate to the social role of the profession.

In HCA, learning is, therefore, a personality process by which the learner can develop as a personality. Without the claim to bring a view of learning reduced to psychology, we consider that the theoretical category **personality**, by its content, can be host and structuring of what is meant by **learning** and **development** when applied to continuing teacher formation.

### *Teaching-learning under the HCA*

Under HCA, teacher learning is a type of activity of professional culture appropriation, mediated, communicative, creative, social, collaborative, conscious, transformative, self-regulated, personological, responsible, which helps in the continuous insertion in the professional culture and in which teachers develop themselves as personalities. Accordingly, learning is a dialectical process, potentiated by various contradictions, driven by needs objectified in the persons' motives for meeting those needs.

What we learn is also influenced by the dynamics of the learning group from which we are part of. Collaboration in the group leads to sharing objectives and goals, exchanging opinions, collective regulation and valuation actions, collective discussions, regarding the opinion and point of view of colleagues, which favors reflective and creative learning.

Learning takes place when the person's actions are directed toward a conscious purpose of assimilating certain knowledge, skills, habits, conduct and other types of activities. Learning requires the participation of consciousness; therefore, it is a typically human activity.

In this focus, learning, as a personality activity, is conscious. The teacher's conscience in this activity allows the metacognitive reflection on the processes and referents involved in learning during the teacher's development, that is, in the affective experiences and reactions, in the personological resources and in the teacher's behavior as a professional, in order to be able to value advances, setbacks and errors in the learning of the contents of professional activity. Consciousness is related to the critical reflection that allows teachers to give new meanings to their ideas and professional behavior and to take on new alternatives by considering new theoretical references and models that allow the creative interpretation and comparison of what they know, make and think about professional activity. At higher levels of development, learning becomes a self-regulating process, linked to the autonomy and growing responsibility of the learner. This process can be explained by the progressive passage from external to internal regulation.

*Learning as a process of appropriation of cultural experience*

Teacher learning, in the context of continuing formation, as discussed, is a process of appropriation of the professional culture that takes place in a complex and gradual manner, which Vigotsky (1987) calls “from the inter-psychological plane” to the “intra-psychological” one, which represents the mechanism of development of higher psychological functions. This kind of human activity is oriented towards the satisfaction of different needs of the teacher. For a proper understanding of this psychological mechanism, the concept of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), and its re-elaboration Zone of Proximal Teacher Development (ZPTD), are necessary. ZPTD-referenced learning, in Vigotsky's (1987) logic, should be understood as the distance between the actual level of development, determined by the ability to solve a problem of professional activity, and the level of potential development, determined by solving problems under the guidance of a trainer or in collaboration with other more capable professionals. This concept expresses the internal relationship between teaching and development, and manifests the genetic law, which postulates that every psychic process of appropriation of professional culture appears twice: first, in an interpersonal relationship, then, as an intrapersonal domain.

In the learning activity, the teacher, interacting with the object of the professional activity, interacts with others, advancing, in the ZPTD of the current potential, from the transition of dependence-independence to independence. Thus, learning situations that enhance personality development, such as the solution of tasks or problem situations of professional activity, happen in a shared way, with the help of more experienced colleagues and trainers, in a communicative interaction, and gradually advance towards intellectual autonomy. Notwithstanding, in this interpretation of the ZPD, Fariñas (2005) draws attention to the fact that potential of development is not limited to solving tasks with less or greater help, but also being determined by the impact that learning has on the lives of teachers as persons.

The ZPTD helps to think didactical and pedagogical practices differently from traditional pedagogy by recognizing that “good learning” is what precedes “development”, being the thus the former takes current development into account, under the educational influence of formation, constantly push the boundaries of the ZPTD, and consequently, the progressive levels of teacher professional development.

The improvements that teacher learning produces are revealed in psychic structuring, in cognitive dimensions with influence on affective ones. In other words, they manifest themselves in the field of thinking, problem solving, new knowledge, skills, habits and abilities of professional activity. They also influence the affective dimension, that is, the inducing regulation of personality, as the reasons for learning, and the satisfaction that the person experiences when learn to apply his new learning in professional life.

## Professional development as teacher personality development

Making sense of the **teacher's professional development** category under the HCA requires understanding the **human psychic development** category, which in turn refers to personality development. Vigotsky (1987, p. 15) refers to psychic development as:

[...] complex dialectical process is characterized by a multiple periodicity, by a disproportion in the development of different functions, metamorphoses or qualitative transformations of some forms in others [...] by the intertwined relationship of internal and external factors.

According to the HCA, the transformations that happen as a result of human development are more lasting, stable and complex if compared to those that occur in learning, in which no qualitatively different formations are evidenced in psychic life and, consequently, in personality. Development represents a dynamic, contradictory and prolonged process that takes place, in the dialectical sense, through qualitative leaps (dialectical ruptures).

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For the purpose of rereading the meaning of teacher professional development under the HCA, a construct that we proposed here is “Teacher Personality Development” (TPD). This is a process that takes place throughout professional life. It has collective, individual, subjective, non-universal dimensions that cannot be reduced to the volume of knowledge and mental actions that teachers master as a result of learning that responds to certain professional life needs. TPD occurs as a dialectical spiral, permeated by advances and setbacks, but always in an increasing direction enhanced by learning.

We can consider TPD as a process of concrete historical-cultural-professional nature: its stages and its psychological peculiarities are determined by the organization and procedures of professional culture appropriation. It is, by its nature, a process: a) complex, as it involves several objective and subjective factors; b) dialectic, because the factors on which it depends are in contradictory relationship, forming dialectical units; c) contradictory and in these contradictions lies the driving force of development and self-development; and d) historical, since each result achieved in a given stage integrates into new stages of development, in a dialectic way, further enhancing new qualitatively higher stages.

The teacher learns and develops him or herself when has a professional life project and carries out it not only in the cognitive dimensions but also in the affective, emotional and ethical dimensions, that is, it is a project that links his aspirations and activities with those of other professionals. TPD implies a present level of assimilated psychological content that leads to new qualitative levels of personality, which include increasing your possibilities as a professional.

The teacher develops him or herself by internalizing the systems of social-professional relations and changing his place in these systems of relationships. Therefore, TPD also expresses itself in new motivations for professional activity and in new activities that, like a spiral, guide interconnected development cycles. Since it is a process, achieving the TPD does not mean reaching the maximum development limit, but successively, new

situations of ever-increasing superior development and, consequently, higher levels of regulation and self-regulation of professional life. And this, in the context of professional activity, translates into a better relationship with the profession and with colleagues and students.

In a discussion about the development of the teacher's personality, in which the dimensions related to professional activity are inserted, two key categories cannot be excluded, structured in a complex, systemic and dialectical view of the relations between learning and teacher development in the context of its continuing formation, which are: Social Situation of Development and Lived Experience. The development of the teacher's personality and the configuration of his professional identity as a teacher are consequences and manifest in new social development situations, new experiences and changes in lifestyle.

### *Social Development Situation (SDS) and Teacher Professional Development (TPD)*

Fariñas (2004) points to the need to understand the ZPD in its dialectical relationship with the concept of “Social Development Situation”, since separating this dialectical pair may lead to an abstract and limited interpretation of the ZPD, disregarding the complex system of influences and self-influences that act on who learns, before and after the activities, in the context of the formation.

Regarding the category, S. S. D. Bozhovich (1976, p. 123) wrote:

By this term, we meant the special combination of the internal developmental processes and external conditions that are typical of each stage and which also condition the dynamics of psychic development during that evolutionary period and the qualitatively peculiar new psychological formations originated at the end of the period.

Thus, the environment influences the teacher depending on at what stage of his development as a personality he or she is. For Bozhovich (1976), the place that a person occupies in the system of social relations, as well as the activities that performs in that system, is a fundamental condition in the development of his or her personality. Although personality is unique, singular, it exists only in this system of relationships in which social experience is produced.

SDS can be considered as the starting point of the dynamic changes that occur in development during a certain period of the person's life. In the case of TPD, this concept needs recontextualization to understand the teacher's particular relationship with the environment and to comprehend how his personality is restructured, which gives rise to psychological particularities characteristic of a given period of professional life.

Interpreting Bozhovich's ideas (1976), the psychological characterization of the person is defined by the personality structure, which is different at each stage of human development. The teacher's professional life influences his personality and this influence is related to the process of the professional development stages. The step from one to another

stage, which is produced by qualitative leaps in the dialectical sense, leads and characterizes new SDSs.

Understanding SDS means understanding the place teachers occupy in the social relations system, the demands that society places on them as professionals and the rights and duties that this entails. Consequently, the analysis of external and internal factors of professional development as a unit can help to understand the structure of the teacher's needs and aspirations in his professional activity.

Reinterpreting the ideas of Petrovski (1979), SDS, in the beginning, must be understood, for the teaching profession, as a system of formation influences that gives rise to new motivations and, thus, potentiates the change of a professional life stage to another, in which new qualities of personality are manifested. At each stage of professional development, the different dimensions of personality are integrated (it may be inappropriate to speak of integration as they do not exist separately), based on the essential contradictions that occur in him or her as a person and as a member of the professional group, besides the social demands of the profession.

From the previous perspective, it can be seen that each stage of the teacher's personality development implies the arrival of a new SDS, which sustains, generates and promotes further development. This situation, in turn, is revealed in the teacher-society and teacher-history-professional culture relations, in which not only their individuality is identified, but also their relationship with the environment, which surrounds him or her in a historical, cultural and professional certain moment.

In the study of TPD, we also must pay attention to the concept of lifestyle, since it has an intrinsic relationship with personality. Lifestyle is an expression of personality and is therefore an important condition for its development and, in turn, personality development influences the teacher's lifestyle. Thus, education must have an impact on the development of the teacher's personality, focusing on how this development influences his or her conception of the world and of the profession, his or her values, the meaning of his or her life, the ways in which he or she thinks, organizes and carries out life and activity professional communication, their professional habits, organization as a professional and personality and life projects at a particular stage or step of his or her professional life. Thus, Fariñas (2004) draws attention to the fact that formation enhances developmental lifestyles of the teacher's personality.

Since TPD does not only cover the professional aspect, it is necessary to observe to what extent teachers' lifestyles promote or not their personality development, and how certain learning activities in learning formation have an impact on such lifestyles, which can be indicators of the teacher's personality development. Factors such as organization and use of time, priorities in life, daily habits, projections for the future, their stereotypes in daily conduct, among others, influence and should be taken into account in teachers' professional development studies as a dimension of their personality development.

*Lived experience (perezhivanie)<sup>i</sup>*

Another structuring category in HCA is the lived experience (*perezhivanie*), introduced by Vigotsky (1996) and developed by other authors, such as Bozhovich (1976). For this author, the lived experience (*perezhivanie*) must be understood as the inner relationship of the person as a human being with one or another moment of his reality, being singular, in other words, personal. For Vigotsky, it is the lived experience that expresses the unity between cognition and affection, an indispensable condition for understanding personality as a synthesizing and stylistic concept.

Vigotsky (1996) considered lived experience (*perezhivanie*) as the unit of origin that support all possible units of personality analysis. A unit of analysis has a systemic, genetic and dialectical character to study development, which tends to overcome the fragmented and dualistic views of the object of study, making possible to approach it in a systemic way, in its complexity and totality, in a continuous movement, with dynamic and dialectical ruptures. The unit of analysis represents the universal dialectic movement – singular-particular – as indivisible, in which the essence of the object of study is revealed.

With this concept, the author seeks a new way of looking at the relationship between person and context. It expresses the emotional experience through which the person becomes conscious, interprets and relates him or herself emotionally to reality. Vigotsky (1996) called lived experience (*perezhivanie*) this experience, attached to personal meaning, and the author established that it is part and expression of human development.

In the opinion of Vigotsky (1982), the lived experience (*perezhivanie*) is a concept that makes possible to study the role and influence of the environment on the psychological development of persons. For him, this concept is instituted in the unit of analysis of the social situation of development, since it represents what persons experience from the influences they receive from the environment and what their experiences provide to them due to the level of development they have experienced. Vigotsky (1982) states that the essential factors that explain the influence of the exterior on psychological development, that is, the conscious personality, are their emotional experiences, so that, in the lived experience (*perezhivanie*), we are always faced with an indivisible unity of personal and situational characteristics.

The lived experience (*perezhivanie*) is personal, which means that teachers can experience different lived experience (*perezhivanie*) in the same situation. In the concept of **lived experience** (*perezhivanie*), emotion is not separated from cognition, nor is the person of his or her situation, history and context. By reflecting the relationships with the environment, it allows the understanding of its influence on psychic development and to what extent it admits or limits the satisfaction of needs, which puts it in the condition of regulating the person's interactions with reality, one of its fundamental functions.

To understand the peculiarities of teachers' lived experiences (*perezhivanie*), in the logic of the discussions proposed by Bozhovich (1987), it is relevant to analyze their needs and aspirations in combination with the objective possibilities of their realization, which is related to two fundamental concepts: the social status and internal perceived status.

The development of the teacher's personality is determined by the correlation between social status (his place in the system of relationships accessible to him), demands placed on him, and psychological particularities, formed as a result of his previous experiences. From this correlation arises the internal perceived status.

The internal perceived status, according to Bozhovich (1976), is the personal appropriation of the demands given in the social position and is formed on the basis of the attitude that the teacher assumes towards the objective social status he or she occupies in the profession and which he or she wishes to occupy from his experiences, possibilities, needs and aspirations. Thus, the internal perceived status is the system of needs and aspirations, represented in subjective lived experiences (*perezhivanie*), which, by interpreting and mediating the influence of the surroundings, become the driving force of personality development.

According to the author, the fact that a person can be situated at a certain stage in the development of his or her personality responds to the coincidence between “his or her social status” and “his or her internal perceived status”. Thus, at each stage of personality development, a certain internal perceived status is typical, the result of interactions between personality and the demands society makes on the teaching profession.

The lived experience (*perezhivanie*), as a unit of personality analysis and its formation, allows to know his or her nature in the teacher's aspirations and needs and how they can be fulfilled. Since lived experience (*perezhivanie*) is produced and developed in the relationship with the surroundings, the teacher, as a person, must transcend a new SDS. In this, the previously moments in the profession, based on his historical-cultural experiences, in face of situations problems and disruptive dissatisfactions of his or her experiences, leads to a new knowledge, a new learning, attitudes and actions that allow him or her different ways of being and acting professionally, experimenting and structuring new experiences. Therefore, it leads to a new SDS to which learning should contribute in the context of teacher formation.

## Conclusions

Teacher learning, in the context of their continuing education, as has been discussed, should be one of the ways for professional development, understood as the development of their personality, which is, in essence, a way of developing the teacher as a person in all spheres of your existence. This means not only good academic performance or an improvement in the professional practice (which is necessary, but not enough).

The separation between learning and personality development as a whole, the focus of learning on the cognitive dimension, typical of many (if not most) studies, is what Fariñas (2004) calls “original sin”. This term is extended to studies of teacher education, which do not establish explicit, solid and well-founded relationships between what teachers are learning and professional development in the context of initial or continuing education, as an element of their personality development.

These positions demand strategic categories for the search of a theoretical framework that enables a view of the teacher's learning as a personality activity that should contribute for the professional development of teachers, in the context of categories such as Social Development Situation and lived experience (*perezhivanie*). Therefore, it is necessary that these categories be redefined for the teacher's life and activity as a professional, which requires another understanding of what is learning and developing in the context of continuing education.

It is important to highlight that the considerations pointed out in this article do not constitute a concern for the unique search for an answer to the problem of continuing teacher education. It is not a call to psychologize continuing education projects for teachers. It is a quest that will, in turn, require an even broader view to insert contributions from other disciplinary fields, such as sociology, anthropology, educational policy, although, by their very nature and content, the categories analyzed, such as personality, learning, training and professional development in the HCA, consider these contributions on the basis of dialectical and historical materialism.

The concerns and reflections that are presented lead us to think about a new vision of the learning processes and the professional development of teachers in the contexts of continuing education. This is not an U turn that would take us to another extreme (or to the same place). It is a three hundred and sixty degree look, which allows us to see the whole, the totality in its complexity, not susceptible to fragmentation for analysis and further integration (process in which we would lose the perspective of the complex nature of the object of study), but rather the search for (complex) units of analysis, as Vigotsky's himself has emphasized in his theorizations. We must learn from the author this way of understanding the teacher's learning as an activity of his personality.

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## Notes

<sup>i</sup> Vigotsky discussed for the first time in his book *The Psychology of Art*, completed in 1925, the concept of *perezhivanie*. The Russian word that has a vagueness in the definition is usually translated as “a lived experience,” and used in connection with “social situation of development”, according to the Australian philosopher Andy Blunden. To know more about the concept, go to <https://www.ethicalpolitics.org/seminars/perezhivanie.htm>. Accessed: Sept. 16, 2019.

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