

# Teacher education courses (Pedagogy)<sup>I</sup>: weaknesses in the basic training of a teacher

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## Abstract

The core issue of this paper is the teacher education undergraduate courses (called Pedagogy in Brazil) set up based on the National Curriculum Guidelines, approved in 2006. Our purpose is to discuss the training of multipurpose teachers for children's education and for the early grades of elementary schools, starting with results of a research conducted in public and private institutions in the state of São Paulo, from 2012 to 2013, funded by CNPq – the National Research Council. For the quantitative approach, we utilized the technique of documental analysis over the set of 144 curriculum grids we were able to obtain. The grounds for the qualitative approach, data were analyzed by cross-checking the characteristics of the institutions with the characteristics of the discipline that make up their curriculum grids. Data reveal that most teacher education courses in the state of São Paulo are provided by private institutions, with minimum number of hours and research is not intrinsic with their characteristics. The interpretative analysis of results establishes that the Pedagogy courses investigated are affected by the same problems pointed out in the literature concerning DCNCP/2006: the vagueness of the pedagogical field and the scattering of the scope of pedagogy and the teacher's professional practice. Consequently, the majority of such courses are not fully training neither the educator nor the multipurpose teacher intended to work in child education (preschool) and the early grades of elementary school, as the education and training they get is fragile, superficial, generalizing, fragmented, dispersive and unfocused. In our conclusion alternatives are indicated in order to overcome some of these problems.

**I-** In Brazil, the teacher education degree is granted upon completion of what is called curso de pedagogia (pedagogy course). This term will be used throughout this paper (translator note).

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## Keywords

Pedagogy courses – Educator training – Teacher education – Multipurpose teacher – National curriculum guidelines.

# **Os cursos de licenciatura em pedagogia: fragilidades na formação inicial do professor polivalente**

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## **Resumo**

*O artigo tem como questão central os cursos de pedagogia organizados a partir das Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais de 2006. Seu objetivo é discutir a formação de professores polivalentes para a educação infantil e para os anos iniciais do ensino fundamental oferecida nesses cursos, a partir dos dados de pesquisa realizada em instituições públicas e privadas do estado de São Paulo, no período de 2012 a 2013, com apoio do CNPq. Para a abordagem quantitativa, foi utilizada a técnica de análise documental do conjunto das 144 matrizes curriculares obtidas. Como base para a abordagem qualitativa, os dados foram analisados a partir do cruzamento entre as características das instituições e as características das disciplinas que compõem suas matrizes curriculares. Os dados mostram que a maioria dos cursos de pedagogia no estado de São Paulo são oferecidos por instituições privadas, com cargas horárias mínimas e que não têm a pesquisa como inerente às suas características. A análise interpretativa dos resultados evidencia que os cursos de pedagogia estudados refletem os mesmos problemas apontados na literatura da área sobre as DCNCP/2006: a indefinição do campo pedagógico e a dispersão do objeto da pedagogia e da atuação profissional docente. Consequentemente, esses cursos, em sua maioria, não estão formando nem o pedagogo e, tampouco, um professor polivalente para a educação infantil e anos iniciais do ensino fundamental, pois sua formação se mostra frágil, superficial, generalizante, fragmentada, dispersiva e sem foco. Na conclusão são apontados possíveis caminhos para superar alguns desses problemas.*

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## **Palavras-chave**

*Cursos de pedagogia – Formação de pedagogos – Formação de professores – Professor polivalente – Diretrizes curriculares nacionais.*

## Introduction

This paper discusses the education of multipurpose teachers in Brazil, intended to work in child education (preschool) and in the early grades of elementary school. Such education is provided by what is called in Brazil *curso de Pedagogia*, literally “pedagogy undergraduate courses”. Our aim is to contribute with the formulation of proposals that will improve the basic training of teachers and the learning by children, youths and adults that attend public schools providing general education.

The discussion is undertaken following the results of the research called *Teacher training for Child Education and the early grades of Elementary School: curriculum review of the Pedagogy Undergraduate Courses in public and private institutions in the State of São Paulo*, conducted between 2012 and 2013, with the involvement of researchers from different higher-education institutions in Brazil<sup>1</sup>. Such study had the purpose of analyzing the teacher education courses provided by public and private institutions in the state of São Paulo by means of their curriculum grids<sup>2</sup>.

The term “multipurpose” refers to a teacher working in the early grades of schooling, a kind of work by such professional that goes back to the origins of the so-called “normal school” of secondary level, in the late 19th century, whose purpose was to train the teacher would teach children the basic disciplines (subjects): the native Portuguese language

**1-** Complete data from this study are found in the report sent to CNPq and partially presented in the XVII National Meeting of Didactics and Teaching Practice (Endipe), which took place in Fortaleza, November, 2014.

**2-** Principal researchers were Selma Garrido Pimenta and José Cerchi Fusari – USP/Gepefe and the executive coordinators were professors Cristina Cinto Araujo Pedroso (FFCLRP/USP) and Umberto de Andrade Pinto (Unifesp/Guarulhos). The following researchers also cooperated: Idevaldo da Silva Bodião (UFCE); Isaneide Domingues (Municipal Education Authority - São Paulo); Karina de Melo Conte (Centro Universitário Claretiano de Batatais); Lenilda Rego Albuquerque Rego (UFAC); Lígia Paula Couto (UEPG); Maria Marina Dias Cavalcanti (UECE); Marineide de Oliveira Gomes (Unifesp/Guarulhos); Naldeli Fontes (UMC); Noeli Prestes Padilha Rivas (FFCLRP/USP); Simone Rodrigues Batista (University Center Monte Serrat – Unimonte – Santos); Valéria Cordeiro Fernandes Belletati (IFSP); Vanda Moreira Machado Lima (Unesp/Presidente Prudente) and Yoshie Ussami Ferrari Leite (Unesp/Presidente Prudente).

(literacy), history, geography, science, and mathematics. This word is no longer mentioned in the Brazilian legislation associated with the issue, including the 2006 National Curriculum Guidelines (GCN) for the pedagogy course. However, the aim of educating those who will teach the above mentioned basic disciplines in the early grades remains, and in the Brazilian school reality, teachers still work as “multipurpose” professionals.

Higher education for such teachers is recent in Brazil (1996). Formerly, there was a secondary-level training known as the “normal school”, set up when the country was still member of an Empire (led by Portugal), and, later on, as a qualification called “*magistério*” (teaching) of secondary level, introduced in the 1970’s under military ruling (CORTESE; FUSARI, 1989). Upgrading the training of these teachers to the higher-education level was a victory of the struggles undertaken by educators and researchers in the area by the early 1980’s. The Act of Guidelines and Grounds for the National Education (LDBEN), of 1996, partly includes this claim in its article 62:

Teacher education for basic schooling shall be carried out on higher level, through a license-awarding degree, with full undergraduate skills, by universities and other higher-education institutions, accepted as the minimum training *to be a teacher in preschool and in the five (5) first grades of basic schooling*, the one provided on secondary level as in the normal category (Wording of Act No. 12,796, of 2013) (BRAZIL, 1996).

Although the possibility of teacher training on secondary level, most states terminated such courses and higher-education teacher training became widespread through the Pedagogy courses (PINTO, 2002).

Since then, a heated debate around the National Curriculum Guidelines took place along ten years. The confrontation among

educational researchers caused stalemates resulting from disagreements regarding the epistemological understanding of Pedagogy as a field of knowledge, and consequently, of the professional to be trained by such course: an educator (meaning a pedagogue) and/or a teacher? (SAVIANI, 2007).

As the DCN were enacted for the Pedagogy undergraduate course in 2006, it did not manage to pacify the antagonistic positions arising from the disagreements and eventually it became official as a crucial role in teacher training for the early grades of basic school and preschool (PINTO, 2011).

However, such training is expanded, as can be seen in its article 4:

[...] The course of Pedagogy that provides a degree and a license is intended for the education of teachers so that they can perform their function in Child Education and in the early grades of elementary school, in high-school when it is a Normal school, in Professional Education for the area of services and school support and in other areas in which pedagogical knowledge is required.

Single paragraph. Teaching activities also include the participation in organizing and managing of educational systems and institutions, encompassing:

I - planning, execution, coordination, follow-up and assessment of tasks that belong to the Education sector; II - planning, execution, coordination, follow-up and assessment of non-schooled educative projects and experiences; III - production and dissemination of scientific/technological knowledge in the educational field, in schooled or non-schooled contexts (BRAZIL, 2006).

As a result, there is a large professional field where the Pedagogy undergraduate can work which significantly exceeds the teaching activity, especially when the idea is to prepare

such teacher for the area of educational management and the work in non-schooled environments.

Research data show that wide spectrum adversely affects the education of the educator/pedagogue as a multipurpose teacher to work in preschool and in the early grades of elementary school, as data corroborate the studies by Gatti and Barreto (2009); Leite and Lima (2010); Libâneo, (2010).

Based on these results, we expect to contribute with the assessments of the recent historical experience in Brazil, that is, education on higher level for such professionals.

When the research began in 2012, the state of São Paulo had 283 Pedagogy courses, according to e-MEC<sup>3</sup> system. However, after looking at the webpage of the institutions we found that in thirty (30) of them the courses were not being provided, therefore, in fact, only 253 courses were in operation. Upon searching the curriculum grids in the websites of the institutions, we observed that such information was not available. Attempts to get the curriculum grids by e-mail yielded a poor response. Thus, the research sample gathered 144 curricular grids from the pedagogy courses provided by both public and private institutions in the state of São Paulo. Out of them, 137 made available the list of discipline and their respective number of hours, and seven (7) made only the list of disciplines available.

In order to analyze the curricular grids a instrument was devised to collect data and it had two parts, one with general data about the institution and the course provided, and the other with the categories that were defined upon the first reading of the grids.

Results demonstrated the insufficiency or even the inadequacy of the current pedagogy courses for the education of multipurpose teachers, since such education requires different types of knowledge: mastery of several areas

**3-** To obtain the list of courses from this system, after selecting *Busca Avançada* (advanced search), we looked at the status *Em atividade* (currently active).

of knowledge that make up the common basis of the national curriculum for the early grades of elementary school and preschool as well as the means and possibilities of teaching those contents, and also the identification of who are the individuals (children, youths and adults) that learn and develop in those educational and schooled environments. In particular, the individuals attending public schools which, nowadays, translate in their everyday lives issues affect and ail Brazilian society, strongly unequal, multifaceted and diversified. They also demonstrate that the education of pedagogues/educators in the state of São Paulo, is mostly fragile, superficial, generalizing, fragmented, dispersive and not focused on teacher education at all.

Hereinafter, data obtained from the analysis of the curricular grids will be presented together with a discussion about the major problems involving the training of pedagogues/educators in pedagogy courses according to the current National Curriculum Guidelines, of 2006. Although the research focused on the course as a whole, we chose to highlight the analysis of the basic training of the multipurpose teacher.

### **The pedagogy courses in the state of São Paulo: a picture**

In order to depict a possible picture of the pedagogy courses in the state of São Paulo, the 144 courses we investigated will be initially presented according to three categories: administrative nature (Table 1); academic organization (Table 2); and time to complete the course (Table 3).

Regarding the administrative nature, either private or public (federal, state or local level), we found that out of the total 144 courses in the study, 125 (86.8 percent) are provided by private institutions and only 19 (13.2 percent) by the public ones. Out of the latter, eight (8) are offered by state, two (2) by federal, and nine (9) by local institutions, as indicated in the table below:

**Table 1** – Distribution of Higher-Education Institutions (HEI) according to their administrative nature.

Nature	No. of HEI	% of HEI
Private	125	86.80
Public/Local	9	6.25
Public/State	8	5.56
Public/Federal	2	1.39
Total	144	100.00

Source: prepared by the authors.

Regarding the academic organization of HEI – University, Higher-Education Center or College – the 144 courses are sorted out as follows:

**Table 2** – Distribution of HEI according to their academic organization.

Type	No. of HEI	% of HEI
University	26	18.06
HE Center	19	13.19
College	99	68.75
Total	144	100.00

Source: prepared by the authors.

Regarding the institution type, there are 99 courses (69 percent) that are provided by colleges, 19 (13 percent) by higher-education centers, and 26 (18 percent) by universities.

Data from the tables show that a significant majority of pedagogy courses in the state of São Paulo are provided by private institutions, adding up to 125 (86.80 percent), and by colleges and higher-education centers (118 = 82 percent), in which the practice of research is not required by the legislation.

Table 3, as follows, displays the list of institutions according to their administrative nature and the time to complete the course in semesters.

**Table 3** – Distribution of HEI according to the time to complete the course by administrative nature.

Time to complete course In Semesters	Total HEI	% HEI	Administrative nature							
			Public Federal		Public State		Public Local		Private	
			No. IES	%	No. IES	%	No. IES	%	No. IES	%
06	47	32.6	---	---	---	---	03	6.4	44	93.6
07	28	19.4	---	---	---	---	01	3.6	27	96.4
08	67	46.6	---	---	08	12,0	05	7.5	54	80.5
09	1	0.7	01	100.0	---	---	---	---	---	---
10	1	0.7	01	100.0	---	---	---	---	---	---
<b>Total</b>	144	100.00	02	1.4	08	5.5	09	6.3	125	86.8

Source: prepared by the authors.

The table above shows that 47 courses (32.6 percent) are provided in six (6) semesters; out of them, 44 (93.6 percent) take place in private institutions. Added up to the 27 courses that are provided in seven (7) semesters by institutions of the same nature, it is seen that 71 courses offered by private institutions take no longer than three years or three years and a half, the minimum length required by Resolution CNE/CP No. 2/2002 (BRAZIL, 2002a)<sup>4</sup>. This total (71) is higher to the total amount of courses provided by private institutions in eight (8) semesters (54). Therefore, courses whose length is less than four (4) years prevail in the private institutions.

Among the public universities, only four (local level) provide a course that is three years or three years and a half long. In the fifteen (15) remaining courses, offered by public institutions, the time to obtain the degree is higher than eight (8) semesters (thirteen institutions are eight semesters long; and two out of nine take ten semesters). Therefore, their length is four years or longer.

**4-** The National Curricular Guidelines for the basic training and the continued training on higher-education level, set forth by Resolution CNE/CP No. 2/2015 (BRAZIL, 2015), expand the minimum number of class hours to three thousand and two hundred (3,200) hours of effective academic work, with a duration of no less than eight semesters in four years, to all license-awarding undergraduate courses in charge of educating teachers for basic schooling. (BRASIL, 2015).

Such data confirm the studies by Gatti and Barreto (2009), whose sample was 71 face-to-face pedagogy courses in the country, and by Libâneo (2010), whose sample was 25 pedagogy courses in the state of Goiás. The training of an educator/pedagogue in Barzil (and in São Paulo, with the 144 institutions herein analyzed) takes place, predominantly, in private institutions, most of them colleges and higher-education centers, in courses whose length is less than four (4) years (or eight semesters).

In the same direction, the study conducted by Leite and Lima (2010), which reviewed 1,424 pedagogy courses in Brazil, concludes that the Southeast region in the one providing more courses of this kind in the country, with the offer concentrated in the state of São Paulo; in 2008, 90 percent of these courses were provided by private institutions.

### **Curricular grid of the pedagogy courses: what is revealed by research data**

To analyze the curricular grids of the 144 courses, nine categories and their subcategories were defined, built from the very grids, and presented in Chart 1, as follows.

**Chart 1** – Percentage distribution of the number of class hours and the number of disciplines in each category, in relation to the grand totals of the mass of courses.

Categories	Regarding the class hours (Grand total: 402,440 h)	Regarding the disciplines (Grand total: 7,203 disciplines)
1. Knowledge associated with theoretical foundations of education	16.41%	15.58%
2. Knowledge associated with the educational systems	5.4%	5.34%
3. Knowledge associated with professional training of a teacher	38.12%	36.92
3.1 Knowledge associated with disciplines with no specification of the schooling level	23.77%	23.42%
3.2 Knowledge associated with child education (preschool)	4.63	4.43
3.2.1 Disciplinary areas/languages in child education (preschool)	2.41%	2.36%
3.2.2 Other types of knowledge in child education	2.22%	2.07%
3.3 Knowledge associated with the early years of elementary schooling	1.65%	1.68
3.3.1 Disciplinary areas in elementary/middle schooling	1.20%	1.24%
3.3.2 Other types of knowledge in elementary/middle schooling	0.45%	0.44%
3.4 Knowledge associated with preschool and elementary/middle school	1.43%	1.19%
3.5 Knowledge associated with didactics	6.64%	6.19%
4. Knowledge associated with educational management	6.73	6.35
4.1 Associated with the school	6.37%	6.03%
4.2 Associated with non-schooled environments	0.36%	0.32%
5. Knowledge associated with supervised internship and teaching practices	4.57%	4.87%
5.1 With no specification of school level	3.13%	3.53%
5.2 With specification of school level	1.44%	1.31
5.2.1 Knowledge associated with internship and teaching practices in preschool	0.53%	0.42%
5.2.2 Knowledge associated with internship and teaching practices in elementary/middle school	0.54%	0.47%
5.2.3 Knowledge associated with internship in educational management	0.37%	0.42%
6. Knowledge of research and final graduation paper	6.78%	7.47%
7. Knowledge associated with types of schooling, differences, diversity, and linguistic and cultural minorities	8.10%	8.51%
8. Integrating knowledge	2.61%	2.33%
9. Other types of knowledge	11.05%	12.68%
Total	100.00%	100.00%

Source: prepared by the authors.

The initial analysis of Chart 1 allows to see a great amount and diversity of disciplines delivered by the courses herein investigated, many of them with no adherence to teaching and the key issues of the early grades of basic schooling. It suggests a wide, scattered and imprecise profile of the students completing such courses, defined in compliance with the National Curricular Guidelines for pedagogy course (BRAZIL, 2006).

Detailed analysis of the categories displayed in the chart shows that the category *Knowledge associated with the professional training of a teacher* represents the highest percentage – around 38 percent of the total class hours – among the categories described. It encompasses disciplines associated with curricular contents (Portuguese language, mathematics, history, geography, science, art, physical education, literacy, body movement, oral and written language, nature and society, for example), usually linked to their respective methods of teaching, as well as other contents associated with teaching practice in child education (preschool) and the early grades of elementary schooling. However, it can be seen that out of this percentage of professional types of knowledge, most of them, 23.77 percent (related to class hours), and 23.42 percent (related to the number of disciplines), do not specify whether they refer to the training for the early grades of elementary school or for preschool.

The second highest percentage refers to the category *Knowledge associated with theoretical foundation of education*, with 16.41 percent. Although this percentage may seem meaningful, possibly it is not sufficient to ensure the basic training of a teacher for the educational area, since it is an extremely complex area which requires multiple references in different scientific fields, such as sociology and philosophy of education, for example.

The third highest percentage (11.05 percent) refers to the category *Other types of knowledge*. It is striking that this percentage is made up of disciplines that did not fit in

any of the former eight categories. Examples of disciplines in these categories are: education and law; theological anthropology; media used in education; introduction to the critique of knowledge; biblical Christian worldview; Christian anthropology; foundations of Christianity; social movements; biblical interpretation of history; science and religion; Christian and professional ethics; religiosity and professional skills; methodology for teaching literacy using the bible; entrepreneurship, sustainability environmental education; interpersonal and group relations; images of ethics in education; notions of epidemiology and public health; school, community and social movements; learning and human rights; online games; psychosocial dynamics in education; education, work and citizenry; new education technologies: technological mediation; media and teaching; psycho pedagogy; phonetics and phonology; educational laws; eco-pedagogy; education in values, among others. One may say that this diversity of disciplines does not point to a favorable aspect of the curriculum grids, as instead it leads to dispersion in the basic training of a pedagogue and of a teacher.

The categories *Knowledge associated with educational systems* and *Knowledge associated with educational management* are not quite represented in class hours and number of disciplines, as shows Chart 1. This information is disturbing since the field of knowledge associated with these categories, when dealing with the organization of the educational systems and curriculum policies, may contribute to educate the teacher with a critical view. Specifically regarding the latter category it should be emphasized that, according to the data we have found, the training of an educational manager, both for the school context and for the non-school environments is severely undermined in the courses investigated.

The category *Knowledge associated with supervised internship and teaching practice* includes the disciplines related to supervised

internship and teaching practices. Through such category we attempted to identify within the curricular grids the existence of effective moments of guidance and supervision towards internship and teaching practice. It is salutary to express the complexity of investigating this field, as the curriculum grids have disciplines related to curricular internships, but they also have the specific, mandatory curricular internship amidst the other disciplines. Thus, the selection for this category included only the disciplines that explicitly were related to supervision and guidance of the internship or the teaching practices, and therefore it did not encompass the mandatory internship that must be done by the students. It was possible to find that approximately half the institutions we investigated do not dedicate any discipline intended for the supervision and monitoring of the internships.

The category *Knowledge of research activities and final graduation paper* represents only 6.78 percent of the total class hours and 7.47 percent of the total disciplines. The variety in the names of disciplines in this category points to a greater concern by the courses with the knowledge associated with the methodological organization of scientific work rather than with the training of a teacher towards research, as advanced studies in the area have shown (GHEDIN et al., 2015).

In the category *Knowledge associated with types of schooling, differences, diversity and linguistic and cultural minorities* are the disciplines dealing with the different type of teaching and schooling and also the differences, diversity and linguistic and cultural minorities. The presence of these disciplines in the courses we have analyzed possibly results from legislation that has recommended providing contents related to these topics in the pedagogy courses, such as for example, Acts No. 11,645/2008 (BRAZIL, 2008) and 10,639/2003 (BRAZIL, 2003), with set forth the guidelines and grounds for the national education intended to include in the official curriculum of the educational

systems the compulsory requirement of the topic Afro-Brazilian and Indian History and Culture; Decree No. 7611/2011 (BRAZIL, 2011), which emphasizes the right of disabled people to be schooled within the general educational system and the need for teacher training in the perspective of inclusive education; Act No. 10436/2002 (BRAZIL, 2002b) and Decree No. 5626/2005 (BRAZIL, 2005) which, respectively, acknowledge the Brazilian sign language as an official means of communication and expression of the deaf communities in Brazil and recommend to implement it as a mandatory discipline in the teacher education courses, and the National Curricular Guidelines for the pedagogy course (BRAZIL, 2006) which recommends the training of a pedagogue/educator to serve also in youth and adulta. However, they count on disciplines and class hours for each of these fields that are insufficient to ensure the training of a teacher to work in the different types of schooling/teaching and with different specialties.

The category *Integrating knowledge was* included with the purpose of analyzing the curricular grids in order to find in the courses a perspective of a curricular model that would be integrating or interdisciplinary. The index we have found was too low, and this shows that the prevalence in courses we investigated of a disciplinary view which, in general, leads to a fragment handling of the schooled knowledge in the early grades, and this makes it hard for the teachers to work in such manner.

Regarding the professional training of a pedagogue/educator, the 2006 DCNCP define a wide spectrum: child education (preschool), educational management, special education, inclusive education, linguistic and cultural minorities, education in rural areas, youth and adult education, indigenous education, environmental education and non-schooled education. In the opinion reports preceding the DCNCP appears the intention that a scattered professional training of pedagogues/educators will be overcome to be translated in the qualifications then called at the time school

supervision, educational guidance, school management and special education.

It can also be seen that the Higher Education Institutions provide disciplines in the areas of mathematics, Portuguese language and instrumental use of Information Technology possibly with the purpose of meeting the gaps in basic schooling experienced by students entering the pedagogy courses.

This set of aspects illustrates the diffusion and dispersion found in the training of a pedagogue/educator, which ends up making it unfeasible to provide a solid education for a multipurpose teacher for the early grades of elementary school and preschool.

This evidence calls for an urgent change in the national curricular guidelines for the pedagogy courses. If not due to other reasons, due to the aspects that the research results clearly reveal: the fragility of the professional status of pedagogue/educators who, somehow, get to work in the schools as multipurpose teachers. And, above all, because they have been trained in such fragile ways, they will hardly be able to lead teaching and learning processes that may contribute to an emancipatory, formative quality for all children, youths and adults that attend the early grades of basic education.

**Pedagogy courses:** possible ways to improve them

Concerned with the scenario previously described, we would like to suggest a few theoretical contributions that result from our studies about teacher education and training.

**The multipurpose teacher and the interdisciplinary approach**

Research data reveal that there is a prevailing disciplinary approach in the courses that causes the training of a teaching pedagogue to be scattered and fragile in his/her work in the early grades of elementary school and preschool. Such teacher is still seen

as a multipurpose teacher, originally thought to be like this. However, the issue of training a multipurpose teacher has vanished from the pedagogy courses, from the debates, from the studies and from the legislation. Why? Is it a minor issue? Does it make sense to speak of multi-skilling today? Are teachers working in preschool and the early grades of elementary school no longer multipurpose teachers?

In our opinion, it seems necessary to discuss this issue in the context of curriculum grids that are fragmented into disciplines. It is suitable to enquire about the advancements in the curriculum area which push towards an interdisciplinary view. Would an interdisciplinary pedagogy course fix the problem of fragmentation in the training of teaching pedagogues in order to providing him with the professional skills of multipurpose teacher?

In the curricular grids we have examined we found an approximate rate of 2 percent of disciplines that express some curricular model that could be called more integrating or more interdisciplinary, by implementing integrating projects and/or activities through with the students may utilize the learning they have constructed in the different disciplines. We understand that if the curricular models does not include such characteristics, it may move to the students the responsibility for an action that is inherent to the training of a multipurpose teacher, that is, the integration between fields of knowledge that arise from different areas of expertise.

**On the diversity of disciplines or the lack of focus**

The courses rely on a broad range of countless and diversified disciplines, possibly for the purpose of preparing the pedagogue in his/her work in several areas, provide the education formerly conducted by the old qualifications and also meet the legislation and policies that are specific and supplementary to the National Curricular Guidelines for the training of pedagogues and other social demands required by his/her work.

In this context it should be asked: what if the pedagogue is trained to be school professional (which includes teaching in the aforementioned early grades) and, in case he or she happens to get a job in some specific area of the social field of education (for example, special education, linguistic and cultural minorities, education in rural areas, youth and adult education, indigenous education, environmental education, information and communication technology), could go back to the educating/training institutions so that he/she could improve skills in the area he or she is now working at? Or even if, in the schools of education (which, by their nature, should not be limited to provide the pedagogy course only), students could take formative paths that are in dialogue and are diversified according to the social, regional demands stated in the political pedagogical project of the educating institutions?

What we have found is that in some institutions one or two disciplines are offered to meet what the DCNCP define as required for the minorities, diversities, types of teaching and schooling etc. Such curricular configuration leads to a generalist formation, that is diffuse and superficial, because merely providing one or two disciplines is not enough to ensure quality education and training with the necessary improvements.

The diversity of disciplines may also reveal an attempt by the institution to provide training both for the teacher in child care and for the early grades of elementary school, and as the educational manager who works in schooled and non-schooled contexts. However, emphasis is on the training of the teacher for the early grades, since the knowledge associated with professional teacher training (disciplinary areas) correspond to 38 percent of the disciplines, the highest index in the set of class hours within the curricular grids. Yet, we understand that this index (Knowledge associated with professional teacher training) is quite less than half the class hours, insufficient

for the direct or indirect treatment of the school knowledge needed in the education that early grade students are entitled to. It is also insufficient when considering how complex teaching a child is.

### **A teaching pedagogue or a generalist pedagogue**

Training the teacher and the pedagogue is what has been defined for the pedagogy courses. However, considering how complex and wide are those professions, it is crystal-clear in the research data that this training is generalizing and superficial, and it does not educate (well) either the pedagogue or the teacher.

Although the prevalence of disciplines associated with the specific knowledge of teacher education has been identified, one realizes that they compete for a place, within the curriculum, with the disciplines of other clusters of knowledge that, allegedly, would provide the formation of the generalist pedagogue, that is, the teacher and the pedagogue. Or the pedagogue, according to Libâneo (1998), who sees that the pedagogy professional is different from the teaching professional, since every teacher could consider him/herself as a pedagogue *lato sensu* pedagogue. Still in Libâneo's opinion, the pedagogical work (the professional skills in a broad range of educative practices) is different from the teaching actions (the peculiar form that the pedagogical work takes in the classroom).

The study by Leite and Lima (2010) highlights such identity contradiction in the pedagogy courses: training the pedagogue versus training the teacher. The authors say that, since they have been set forth in 1939, the legislation has been modified, with a strong presence of teaching, but they still face great difficulties when defining their identity. What is expressed in the diversity of the purposes taken by the current DCN helps comprehend quite well the quality of the training and encumbers

pedagogical projects that are emancipating and committed to the responsibility of making the school a partner in the nation's social, economic and cultural democratization.

### **On training the teacher for the early grades or for child education (preschool)**

Research results reveal a tendency in the courses investigated of focusing teacher training for the early grades to the detriment of the training to work in child care, an area that has slowly gained curricular space, since it is relatively new in higher education. The presence of disciplines associated with this level of schooling may indicate some commitment by the courses towards higher education of the professional who will work with small children, in daycare and preschools, overcoming the formative proposal of the high-school and normal school training.

### **What about the didactics in the training of pedagogues and teachers?**

Regarding didactics, a discipline intended to cooperate with the training of teachers on the study of teaching and learning processes taking place between the teacher and the students, what is the situation in the pedagogy courses we have analyzed? It is noted that didactics is present in only 6.64 percent of the class hours.

If we agree that, as the area of pedagogy,

[...] the object of investigation of Didactics is teaching. Considering it an educational practice in historically located situations means to examine it in the social contexts where it is implemented – in classes and in other teaching situations in the different areas of knowledge, in the schools, in the educational systems, in the cultures, in societies – setting the connection between them. The new possibilities of didactics are emerging from the investigations on *teaching as a social living practice* (PIMENTA, 2010, p. 17).

Thus, we must enquire about the problems arising from the near absence of this discipline in the pedagogy courses that are meant for the training of teachers.

Didactics play a crucial role in the pedagogy courses, as Libâneo (1994, p. 25) puts it: “[it] is the main branch of studies in Pedagogy... [which] investigates the fundamentals, conditions and ways of conducting instruction and teaching”. However, in the data we have obtained, both regarding the total disciplines offered in the curricular grids and in the class hours, this discipline represents only 6% of the course.

### **On training pedagogues to participate in educational management**

Are the pedagogy courses in the state of São Paulo training their pedagogues to take part in the organization and management of educational systems and institutions, in schooled and non-schooled environments?

Such intention, as defined in the DCN, was seen in the curricular grids in a particular way: the percentage of class hours associated with disciplines in this category in relation to the total class hours of the courses was 6.73 percent, sorted out as follows: 6.37 percent for the knowledge about school and only 0.36 percent for disciplines related to the management area in non-schooled contexts. These disciplines turned out to be ones least provided, although they were present in all grids analyzed.

Why?

A possible assumption is that it shows a variety of concepts often supported by previous normative guidelines such as, for example, the Higher-Education Institutions (HEI) that divide the training of managers into the following disciplines: school management, pedagogical coordination, school supervision, academic guidance, which is characterized by fragmentation among the different attributes of each educational manager, but with a tendency

of touching the specificity of each job. Thus, some HEIs are maintaining some disciplines aimed at the old qualifications that should be provided by a pedagogy course, still in compliance with the 1969 Technical Report 252, based however on the current National Guidelines, of 2006, also insufficient to actually train a pedagogue, *stricto sensu*.

### **On the heterogeneousness in the names of the disciplines provided**

How can we understand this? What is the meaning of that?

The enormous diversity and heterogeneousness in the names of disciplines may be explained by the disputes occurring in the field of education, tensioned by the emerging areas and which reveal to be mostly related to the possible jobs in the labor market for professional pedagogues. In addition to the findings of studies that demonstrate that the social and financial downgrade and the persistent and precarious working conditions and careers of teachers in Brazil. The drop in the number of applicants to the pedagogy courses is becoming sharp since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. After all, students ask themselves: what would be my profession when I graduate? Many do not wish to be a teacher. The institutions, in turn, try to be more attractive by offering countless (and disperse) disciplines that might place their ex-students in conditions to find some other job or role in the area, or not.

The current DCN foster such heterogeneousness.

**On supervised internship:** 300 or 400 hours? A quasi absence, a legal disobedience, and a way of ignoring reality towards which pedagogues are trained?

Although the minimum internship hours was present in the curricular grids we have analyzed, in compliance with what is set forth by the DCN (300 hours) for the pedagogy courses,

50 percent of them do not provide a discipline whose name refers to internship supervision and guidance or teaching practice. Among those who had disciplines associated with internship, only 27 percent out of 144 specified whether the discipline was intended for internship in preschool, elementary/middle school or educational management, and the offering in this share of Higher Education Institutions (HEI) was balanced and did not prioritize any of these aspects of professional training.

The fact that approximately half of HEIs did not provide disciplines associated with internship and less than 30 percent specified what it was intended for, seems to be an indication of little concern in fully complying with CNE Opinion Report No. 27 (BRAZIL, 2001) related to internship in the several areas where a pedagogue is supposed to work, for example, as a teacher or as a manager. Such data may also be a sign that the internship is provided by course regardless of the discipline and without the necessary links.

We also emphasize that CNE/CP Resolution No. 02/2002 (BRAZIL, 2002a) stipulates 400 hours of practice as a curricular component to all license-granting degrees (including pedagogy) to be experience along the course; and 400 hours of supervised curricular internship starting after the second half of the course. These guidelines have not been complied with by the pedagogy license-granting courses.

Despite the advancement of defining the beginning of the supervised internship in the second half of the course, as it may get undergraduates to get closer to the school reality and the educative, pedagogic, and teaching practices, and no longer by the end of the course as it used to happen, this Resolution ends up dichotomizing and confusing internship and practice, causing severe misunderstandings in teacher training and leading to poor pedagogic activities and a poor comprehension of the school contexts.

Although, in this study, we did not characterize the courses according to the shift

they were offered (during the day or at night), the cooperation by Leite and Lima (2010) is important as they analyzed 1,424 pedagogy courses throughout Brazil crossing the night shift with internship. The authors found that most pedagogy courses are provided in the night shift, and this may adversely affect an internship in the early grades of elementary school and preschool.

Several studies suggest it is possible to overcome the dichotomy between internship and practice if one:

[...] understands internship and practice in the sight of unity, by which both have an investigative nature, that is, investigation is taken as a basic instrument to ensure students to get closer to reality and to think over what is going on in the school [based on the theoretical tools provided by the course], and it also brings to the students, teachers-to-be the idea of research as formative principle of teaching and this contributes to the construction of a teacher's identity (ALMEIDA; PIMENTA, 2014, p. 32).

Thus we also agree with Pimenta and Lima (2006), who see research during internship as a method of educating and training future teachers. This view translates into the mobilization of studies that allow for the expansion and analysis of contexts where internships take place, as well as it helps interns to acquire the attitude and the skills of a researcher in the situations they go through during the internship. Doing so they will think of projects that allow them to simultaneously understand and problematize the situations they observe. Research during internship and internship as an opportunity to do research open the way for the education of a teacher who is critical, reflexive and research: this is the great challenge of the curricular proposals for teacher education courses.

For such, internship should be hub for the entire curriculum, starting with a close look

at the schools. Thus, jit should begin when the course begins and take the reality of school as object of research for the whole set of das disciplines, and go back to reality with proposals of how to overcome the problems found that prevent schooling from being emancipatory and with quality for all.

### **Closing comments**

The curricular grids of the pedagogy course face the same problems identified in the DCN, that is, the fact that the pedagogical field is undefined and there is a scattering of the object of pedagogy and of the teacher's work as a profession. As a result, most courses cannot cope with the task of training neither a pedagogue nor a teacher for the early grades of elementary school and for preschool.

Looking at the data we obtained, it will be possible to think of other intersections, considering the same categories that have guided this study, as for example: a separate analysis of the courses provided online (distance education); the analysis of courses that are offered at night, and others.

Last, the results of this study seek to contribute with the debate and research on the education and training of multipurpose teachers for preschool and elementary school, as well as for the public policies in this area, especially, the National Education Council (CNE) and the State Education Councils (CEE) and for the review of the National Curricular Guidelines of the pedagogy courses. It also intends to add up to the results of other recent studies which have examined the profile and perspectives of students who register in the pedagogy courses (GOMES, 2014; OLIVEIRA, 2013; MARIN; GIOVANNI, 2013; MARIN, 2014).

Based on the results of this study, we suggest some possible ways for further investigation:

- analyze what is proposed in the study program of the disciplines concerning the

objectives, the contents, the formative practices and the theoretical framework;

- through study cases, take an in-depth analysis of some pedagogical projects of the courses, which by their curricular grids turned out to be an advancement in terms of conducting a training based on interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity, as most of them are committed to teaching in the perspective of the multipurpose teacher;

- proceed with the analysis of the curricular grids by sorting out the distance (online) courses and the night courses.

Our study allowed us to get to know a significant universe of pedagogy courses provided by public and private institutions in the state of São Paulo. However, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of our research as we did not access, in the stage conducted so far, to the political pedagogical project of the courses and the study program of disciplines. Our findings point out the relevance of going further with the investigation with the purpose of analyzing what is proposed and how the formative practices are effected in the development of the respective courses.

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