

Concepts of the teacher as researcher and reflective teacher: perspectives about teachers' work*

TATIANA BEZERRA FAGUNDES

Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil

ABSTRACT

This article inquires into the nature of two concepts: the teacher as a researcher and as a reflective teacher. It uses the theoretical-conceptual research approach. The objective is to study how these ideas were adopted in the field of education and applied to basic schoolteachers' training and practice. This article searches for elements that contribute to (re)configure the concept of the teacher as a researcher today. Although it should be considered that, for a long period of time, the aforementioned concepts have undergone many criticisms, reformulations and developments, it seems that there are still important elements that need to be considered and detailed when searching on these issues. That is, to rescue the contexts that motivate their construction. Contrasting with current educational realities one can find other ways to think about teachers' training and practice.

KEYWORDS

teacher as researcher; reflective teacher; theoretical-concept approach.

* This work was funded by Fundação Carlos Chagas Filho de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (FAPERJ).

OS CONCEITOS DE PROFESSOR PESQUISADOR E PROFESSOR REFLEXIVO: PERSPECTIVAS DO TRABALHO DOCENTE

RESUMO

Este artigo situa e problematiza a natureza dos conceitos de professor pesquisador e professor reflexivo por meio da abordagem de estudo teórico-conceitual com o objetivo de verificar como eles foram apropriados pelo campo da educação e aplicados à formação e prática dos professores da educação básica. A partir dessa discussão, busca-se elencar elementos que possam contribuir com a (re)configuração do conceito de professor como pesquisador na atualidade. Embora se deva considerar que um longo caminho tenha sido percorrido e os conceitos supracitados tenham sofrido uma série de críticas, reformulações e desdobramentos, um componente importante na discussão sobre o professor pesquisador e o reflexivo ainda pode ser considerado e detalhado. Trata-se de resgatar os contextos que motivaram suas construções. Nesses contextos, em confronto com as realidades educativas atuais, podem ser encontrados subsídios para se pensar a formação e prática de professores.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

professor pesquisador; professor reflexivo; estudo teórico-conceitual.

LOS CONCEPTOS DE PROFESOR INVESTIGADOR Y PROFESOR REFLEXIVO: PERSPECTIVAS DE TRABAJO DOCENTE

RESUMEN

En este artículo se discute la constitución de los conceptos de profesor investigador y profesor reflexivo tomando por base un estudio teórico-conceptual, con el objetivo de verificar cómo tales conceptos han sido apropiados por el área de la educación y cómo se han aplicado a la formación y a la práctica de los profesores. Con esta discusión buscamos elementos capaces de contribuir con la (re)configuración del concepto del profesor investigador en la actualidad. Aunque se deba tener en cuenta que un largo camino ha sido recorrido y los conceptos presentados sufrieron una serie de críticas, reformulaciones y desdoblamiento, aún se puede considerar y detallar un componente importante en la discusión sobre el profesor investigador y el reflexivo. Se trata de rescatar los contextos que motivaron sus construcciones. En tales contextos, en oposición a las realidades educativas actuales, se pueden encontrar subsídios para pensar la formación y práctica de profesores.

PALABRAS CLAVE

profesor investigador; profesor reflexivo; estudio teórico-conceptual.

INTRODUCTION

To consider the theme of teachers as researchers and the reflective teacher and its limitations, challenges and prospects for the specific field of Brazilian education, it is necessary to consider its conceptual construction and uses in this context. This construction can be located in the work of Stenhouse (1975, 1981) and Shön (1983, 1992) and its use seems to have served at least two purposes. One has been to identify and denominate teacher movements that were fundamentally concerned about what students were learning in their schools. The second has been to serve as theoretical support for educating teachers as reflective professionals who may have research as a recurring practice in their teaching.

According to André (2005, p.56), “the movement¹ that emphasizes the importance of research in teacher training is fairly recent,” and has gained strength in Brazil since the late 1980s, with substantial growth in the 1990s.

The information about the existence of these movements in different countries has systematically reached us and got a boost from the publication of the collection organized by Antonio Nóvoa (1992), under the title *O professor e a sua formação* [Teachers and their training]. The book has Portuguese translations of articles by various authors that discuss teacher training based on the premise that it is necessary to review educational research to meet the demands of teaching.

This publication sparked the appearance of other contributions and allowed contextualizing and discussing what it means to be a teacher-researcher, a reflective teacher and the role of research in education, from different points of view (André, 2005; Geraldi; Fiorentini; Pereira, 1998). Moreover, it raised a series of discussions that led to the following questions: Who is a teacher-researcher and who is a reflective teacher? What are their characteristics? What are the properties and nature of their research? Is research by teachers scientific research? “What kind of teacher and research does it involve? What conditions do teachers who work in schools have to do research? What research has been produced by teachers in schools?” (André, 2005, p.55); “What counts as research?” (Lüdke, 2009, p.27).

The purpose of this article is to study the nature of the concepts of teacher-researcher (Stenhouse, 1975; 1981) and reflective teacher (Shön, 1983; 1992) and problematize it through a theoretical-conceptual study (Checkland; Holwell, 1998). The objective is also to verify how these concepts were appropriated and merged by the field of education and applied to the education and practice of teachers. Based on this questioning and verification, the paper will discuss elements that can contribute to the (re)configuration of the concept of teacher-researcher,

1 The movement that André (2005) refers to concerns the movement in academia represented by the educational literature, which considers research as a fundamental part of teacher education and seeks ways to conduct it in different settings and principles. This movement should not be confused with what is being called in this article as teachers' movements. This term refers to movements initiated by experienced basic education teachers who sought to change the reality of basic education as a result of their experiences with their students.

reappraising it from its bases so that it can help other teachers' movements to gain strength and legitimacy.

As this paper attempts to demonstrate, in the movement that motivates the construction of the concept of teacher-researcher there are favorable conditions that allow the extension of this concept to different educational realities. The (re)configuration of this concept primarily includes the individuals for whom school practices are intended. These practices need to consider the socio-cultural construction of these individuals, their interculturality and particularly their demand for inclusion (Fleuri, 2003; Ribeiro, 2008; Senna, 2007b).

According to Checkland and Holwell (1998), a conceptual framework is created when the researcher establishes connections between different concepts to reveal and support a research question. A theoretical framework, in turn, can be used to guide and compare research questions that are still under construction or in need of improvement. For this purpose, a set of principles is formulated to explain facts or phenomena, especially those that have been tested and have a wide acceptance but do not apply to a given social reality, which seems to be the case of the current concepts of teacher-researcher and reflective teacher. This set of principles can be used to predict, create or innovate a phenomenon under study (Checkland; Holwell, 1998).

According to Senna (2007a, p. 47), the construction of a concept or a theory must consider its external and internal adequacy:

- (a) external adequacy, according to which the elements of the theory must propose tangible explanations for the worldly facts it describes;
- (b) internal adequacy, according to which the structure of the theory (its arguments, variables, and other aspects it is comprised of) should maintain consistency with its parts, as well as with itself and other theories that preceded it in the same doctrinal line.

This paper aims to achieve its objectives based on this foundation.

At first, it will discuss how, a teachers' movement within what was then known as English secondary schools, led to the understanding of teachers as researchers. The paper points out that the collaboration and negotiations between the teachers of those schools with educational specialists from institutions of higher education were characterized as action research. This characterization was due to the recognition of particularities of action research in the collaborative process.

Firstly, it is necessary to clarify that action research is a term coined in the social sciences, whose authorship is attributed to Lewin (1946)², and in this realm its basic fundamentals can be defined as: its participatory nature, democratic impulse and contribution to social change (Pereira, 1998, p.168). However, what stands out in this first part of the article is the practice of teachers in English secondary schools, which has supported the concept of teacher-researcher, and preceded the

2 However, it is recognized that the term and the very use of action research may have arisen previously (Tripp, 2005).

idea of action research, which was later applied to the work they did in conjunction with experts in the field.

The first section also presents as a subtopic another movement of teachers, this time in Brazil, in the city of Rio de Janeiro. This movement presented a legitimate concern about students' learning in school and demanded consistency between the production of knowledge about education and the experience in basic education classrooms. According to Senna (2003), these requirements would provoke among the more attentive academic strata, recognition of the need to produce knowledge for education and a review of its assumptions so that they could minimally answer the questions raised by teachers in college level teacher education courses. According to the author, action-research-action could be the name used for the movement that was mainly "by" and "for" teachers "with professional experiences and common interests, always connected to the routine of the basic education school and its students" (*idem*, p. 107).

Action-research-action and action-research are classifications that refer to the same concept, whose meaning can be defined as the search for forms of collective action aimed at solving a problem or transforming a given reality (Thiollent, 2011, p.13).

The suffix *action* that Senna (2003) places in the expression *action-research* – thus creating a new concept – emphasizes that the action of teachers in basic education brought to light the need to produce knowledge for this level of education. It should be noted that in the examples in both England and Brazil, there was a situation arising among basic education school teachers who were attentive to the demands of their students. In England, it led to the concept of teacher-researcher and gave way to the conceptual categories of action-research when these teachers were encouraged to collaborate with experts. In Brazil, it was considered that the teachers' movement had characteristics that resembled the methodology of action-research. There was no a priori action-research project that generated the movements described, on the contrary, the movements were regarded as action-research because of their characteristics.

The second part of this article analyzes the nature of the concept of reflective-teacher, which is addressed in the study by Shön (1983) about the reflective professional and which served as a basis for thinking about teacher education, and became a paradigm in Brazilian education.

The analyses in this paper suggest that the concepts of teacher-researcher (Stenhouse, 1975, 1981) and reflective professional/teacher (Shön, 1983, 1992) were amalgamated into the reflective-teacher paradigm (Nóvoa, 2001) widely used by sectors that have the prerogative to guide teacher education and classroom practices (Brasil, 1999, 2002).

Although it should be considered that a long road has been taken and the aforementioned concepts have received substantial criticism, reformulation and developments (Arce, 2001; Duarte, 2001; Elliott, 1998; Libâneo, 2010; Miranda, 2005; Pimenta, 2005; Sacristán, 2010; Silva, 2008; Zeichner, 2008), it seems that an important component of the discussion on the teacher-researcher and reflective-teacher can still be considered and detailed, namely, the reappraisal of

the contexts that motivated their construction. After all, it is in those contexts, in contrast with the current educational realities, that it is possible to find data to think about the education and practice of teachers and especially the students that are found in them.

TEACHERS' MOVEMENT: THE MOTIVATION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE CONCEPT OF THE TEACHER AS RESEARCHER COMBINED WITH ACTION-RESEARCH

As already mentioned, the idea of the teacher as researcher has one of its roots in England and emerged in the 1960s from a movement of teachers of so called secondary modern schools, which came out of the curriculum reform process. This reform sought to foster a curriculum and a pedagogical change “intended to reconstruct the conditions under which *all students, particularly those considered average and below average with regard to academic skills*, obtained access to a significant and valuable basic general education” (Elliott, 1998, p.137, emphasis added).

Students attended secondary modern schools after primary school who did not have good results in selection tests for admission to what were considered the best English secondary schools, which would ensure them, as a rule, a good performance on the exam required to obtain a General Certification of Education. They were offered “a less dense curriculum and in general the students were not prepared for the more advanced levels” (Pereira, 1998, p.155).

For the reform to attain its objectives in schools, which came to be known as innovative, the everyday experiences of students were considered. The school subjects were arranged to relate them to issues of daily life such as family, relationships between the sexes, war and society, labor, poverty, law and order (Elliott, 1991). These contents were presented by interdisciplinary teams of teachers to ensure students' interest and the relevance of their studies to their lives.

According to Elliott (1993), who was a teacher of biology and religious studies at that time in one of those innovative schools, the context of curriculum reform led him to later understand, that a new way was being established to develop theories that were based on attempts to change curriculum practices in school. In this sense, the theories were derived from practices that have been regarded as “categories of hypotheses” to be proven (Pereira, 1998, p.157).

In this context, Lawrence Stenhouse, head of the Humanities Curriculum Project,³ systematized and organized “the curriculum plan that emerged in an embryonic form in the movements of secondary modern schools” (*idem*, p.158),

3 The purpose of the Humanities Curriculum Project was to “explore the principles underlying the relationship between teaching and research” and endorse the reform of examinations and curricula primarily for the students with “average” or “inferior” ability in subjects within the humanities. (Pereira, 1998, p. 158)

making additions to it and making use of the Aristotelian concept of *praxis*⁴ to defend the curriculum – that which happens during a lesson (Stenhouse, 1981) – as a process and the means by which educational ideas are developed and proven. Therefore, the curriculum would be “a set of hypothetical procedures to be tested based on a reflection on ideas put into action” (Pereira, 1998, p. 159) and the teacher would have a leading role in the construction of “curriculum theory” (Elliott, 1998). The idea of the *teacher as a researcher* defended by Stenhouse came precisely from this conception of curriculum and curriculum theory.

According to Lüdke (2001, p. 80), in the work of Stenhouse (1975), teacher-researchers were put into prominence as professional, who like artists, seek the best ways to reach students in the teaching and learning process and, by using different materials, look for the solutions most suitable to their creations.

A similar reference to Stenhouse can be found in the work of Dickel (1998, p. 51), who highlights the context from which the author departs when he considers the teacher as a researcher. According to Dickel, this involves recognizing “in an environment that belittled the role of the teacher as a producer of knowledge” and in which research and theories in education did not seem to dialog with educational contexts – the teachers as individuals who have the prerogative to experiment through their categories of hypotheses, which is part of their educational practice, and thus generate theories based on it.

Stenhouse’s (1975) important construction in support of the teacher as a producer of knowledge about the situations experienced in their teaching practice was in keeping with ideas raised by the Humanities Curriculum Project, a reform that was initiated five years earlier by some teachers of the secondary schools mentioned above (Pereira, 1998, p. 158).

In addition to the Humanity Project, other projects also took place and involved teachers in research and evaluation of their own curricular activities. Teachers of innovative schools were encouraged to “collaborate with curriculum specialist from higher education institutions to analyze the problems and effects of implementation of the proposed changes” (Elliott, 1998, p. 138).

Elliott argues that the negotiations and collaborations between teachers and experts in the context where these projects developed characterized the initial form of what was later known as *action-research*. Thus, the beginning of both the concept of teacher as researcher and of action-research in education emerged from the movement of English teachers.

It is now difficult to reach a consensus on the concept of action-research because it has developed, according to Lewin (1946), in different fields, and became applicable to different situations (Tripp, 2005). In education, action-research can be considered a strategy that involves teachers and researchers with the common goal of using it to create new possibilities for teaching and consequently for

4 According to Aristotle, *praxis* refers to an ideal of life and updating of ethical values. Along with education, *praxis* constitutes a form of action that presupposes incompleteness, requiring continuous reflection and analyses (Dickel, 1998, p. 50).

students' learning. However, in education, there were also developments that made action-research a research practice with distinct configurations and objectives (*idem*, p. 445).

It must be emphasized, however, that action-research was the concept that came to identify a movement, primarily initiated by teachers. When they received contributions negotiated with specialists from higher education, it was considered that this movement had features that could relate it to the existing concept.

Based on this teachers' movement, it was possible to see an expansion of studies around action-research for education (Franco, 2005; Pimenta, 2005; Tripp, 2005), as well as the idea of teachers as researchers. Both were connected and expanded on by Stenhouse (1975, 1981), by Elliott himself (1990, 1998) and by other authors (Gerald; Fiorentini; Pereira, 1998; Porlán; Martín; 1997; Zeichner, 1998), who gave them the legitimacy needed to circulate in the academic circles within which action-research had been discussed and evaluated.

The circulation of these ideas, predominantly in academic contexts, seems to have led to a certain distancing from the original situation from which they were derived. Thus, when one now seeks applicability for the concept of teacher-researcher in schools and classrooms, it is hard to find.

This may be different if one looks among basic education teachers for evidence of movements (Ginzburg, 1989) that sought to improve student learning. With these teachers, one could attempt to understand the nature and the proposal of their movements, which may even be related to researchers whose concern relates to the construction of teaching that is relevant to the human education of social beings who are in schools. Movements in this direction can be seen in works such as those described by Hernandez and Ventura (1998).

BRAZIL: A TEACHERS' MOVEMENT BEYOND ENGLAND – ANOTHER POSSIBILITY FOR ACTION-RESEARCH IN EDUCATION AND TEACHER AS RESEARCHERS

As we tried to show in the preceding discussion, the motivation for deriving the understanding of action-research in the educational field, as well as the concept of teachers as researchers before its influence in academia, has its origins in the curricular practices of secondary school teachers in England in the 1960s. In this paper, it is considered that in Brazil, particularly in Rio de Janeiro, there was a similar movement, which was also recognized as action-research and was initiated by basic education teachers.

Given the increasing rates of school dropouts that had become notorious in the last two decades of the twentieth century in Brazil and the constant responsibilities this placed upon educational professionals, these teachers began to resent "the lack of reciprocity between theoretical abstracts and their daily classroom routine" (Senna, 2003, p.103). The truths built by academic research and taken as principles to be used by teachers in schools have not prevented criticism, leading to deep dissatisfaction among these professionals (*idem*). This discontentment

was expressed, for instance, in the Undergraduate Course for Teachers of the Municipality of Rio de Janeiro (CPM)⁵.

The CPM was an undergraduate course offered by the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ) in partnership with the Municipal Department of Education of Rio de Janeiro. It sought to provide higher education for teachers who had received teacher certification from a high school level teachers education course. Experienced teachers who were taking the CPM course began to question the theories propagated by the experts who taught the course.

In view of evidence that revealed that there was some incompatibility between the needs teachers' have to teach their students in classrooms and the theoretical support that they had been receiving in their training, some segments of the Teachers Colleges and the municipal secretariats of education initiated a movement "to which was given the suggestive name of 'action-research-action'" or simply, action-research (*idem, ibidem*). According to Senna (*idem*, p.104), based on that movement, it was possible to attribute academic value to the statements of a teacher-student without this being seen as daring or immediatism on the part of those who do not want to think. Rather, this statement made the academy look at itself and become aware of its fragility "in relation to someone who could discern truths from mere convictions" (p.104). According to the author, the revolutionary character of the movement for a scientific culture did not result in a new concept of research, but rather, resulted in the loss of confidence in its ability to construct truths and mainly to make living based on education without actually partaking in it.

Once again, action-research was useful to denominate a movement that originated among teachers and the knowledge they have about their workspaces and students, extending to the context of production of knowledge in the academy. There is no action-research project defined as a research methodology that has been designed to meet needs raised by teachers. However, there is a process of raising the awareness of specialists involved with the production of knowledge *for and in* education, who considering facts raised by teachers, recognize the importance of reformulating their assumptions about what involves learning in classroom contexts. The interrelationship established between basic education teachers and college professors with a common goal could also be recognized as action-research.

The movement that led to the construction of the concept of teacher as researcher in England and generated the understanding of action-research in education, as well as the example of a movement of basic education teachers that resonated among education specialists at a Brazilian university, reveals that there is a space between universities and schools that allows the emergence of differentiated work proposals. These proposals are consistent with the educational demands involving these two important educational institutions and escape conceptualization that is restricted to academia.

5 The course began in 1992 and lasted until 2002.

The discussion so far raises questions concerning action-research in education. One can consider the expansion, or resumption, of the concept of action-research in education beyond a research methodology so that it fits movements of the type described above. If this is the path taken, it will be important to consider these movements as an innovative way to stimulate research in education, as it was at its origins.

Another possibility would be to separate the described movements from work involving action-research so that they can be recognized primarily as movements of teachers who support any research and thought that formulates theories consistent with educational contexts, understanding theory according to Senna (2007a, p. 47). This option can limit the discussions and the movement itself, which led to action-research in education.

Any of the possibilities described, as well as many other issues to be raised and a dense construction to be conducted, deserves further analyses based on what is proposed in this paper. For now, it is important to emphasize that the teachers' movements were legitimate and motivated the concept of action-research in education and teachers as researchers. These movements can serve a (re)configuration of the concepts so that they continue to resonate among basic education teachers and researchers who focus on research in education.

In addition to this discussion, it is also necessary to examine the accommodation of the concept of teachers as researchers under the reflective teacher's paradigm (Nóvoa, 2001). It is thus important to have a minimal understanding of the motivation for constructing the concept of reflective-teacher and its appropriation by the educational field.

THE REFLECTIVE-TEACHER: ITS NATURE AND ISSUES FOR BRAZIL

In the work published in 1983 under the title *The reflective practitioner*, Donald Schön developed the idea of a reflective practitioner based on the work of John Dewey⁶ and his observation of the practice of professionals in the fields of architecture, design and engineering (Campos; Pessoa, 1998, p. 194; Pimenta, 2010).

In this work, Schön proposes that vocational training should take into account knowledge constructed in action. According to Schön, tacit, spontaneous and intuitive knowledge is present in action. This knowledge, which Schön (1992) called "knowledge in action," is part of the daily lives of professionals and becomes a habit (Pimenta, 2010, p.20). However, within the practice of a profession, there are uncertain, conflicting and unusual situations that require professionals to create innovative solutions and build new action strategies to resolve them.

The process of finding and creating solutions is called "reflection in action" by Schön (1992). As Campos and Pessoa (1998, p. 197) point out:

6 In addition to Dewey, as Pimenta (2010) pointed out, Schön (1983, p. 19) also made use of Luria's studies, Kuhn, Wittgenstein and Polanyi who presented elements to propose an epistemology of practice, i.e. the "professional development as a moment of building knowledge".

For Schön, reflection in action is in direct relation to present action, that is, knowledge in action. It means to produce a pause – *to reflect* – in the midst of this action, a moment when we stop to think, to reorganize what we are doing, reflecting on the present action (emphasis in the original).

From the “reflection in action,” professionals begin to construct a repertoire of experiences that are mobilized in similar situations. The attitude of reflecting on the reflection that led them to act in a certain way in the action characterizes the “reflection on reflection in action” (Schön, 1992). This, in turn, allows professionals to plan future actions.

The principles defined by Schön – knowledge in action, reflection on action and reflection on reflection in action – to elucidate the practice of professionals in the fields of engineering, design and architecture were generalized and began to serve as a new basis for education in other fields, including education.

Schön’s specific contribution to the educational field is made in the article “Training teachers as reflective practitioners” (*idem*), in which he uses the same concepts developed in *The reflective practitioner* (Schön, 1983) to consider the education of teachers. This gave rise to the widespread idea of “reflective teacher” in the field of education. As Lüdke (2001, p.80) highlights, while Schön’s object of analysis has never properly been teachers, “his suggestions met the expectations of educators of future teachers’ in such a way that they have achieved a kind of success that has been hard to obtain by other ideas in the field of education”.

This acceptance was gained mainly because the perspective of education conveyed in Schön’s (1983) work emphasized professional knowledge and presented itself as an alternative to technical rationality. That is, it contrasted with those assumptions that scientific knowledge produced in an academic context and presented in the initial training of professionals would be applicable to their practice (Pimenta, 2010).

In addition to meeting the expectations “of educators of future teachers”, it also generated the hope that better results would be obtained from this training when it comes to education in school contexts that receive an increasing number of socially disadvantaged students (Mattos, 2009).

An examination of the applicability of the concept of reflective teacher, however, indicates that it did not establish itself as an alternative to technical rationality – to the contrary, it served to give it a new look (Castro, 2005) – and much less as a possibility for educating teachers for inclusionary educational contexts (Senna, 2008).

In fact, what seems to have happened in Brazil was the appropriation of this concept to form the basis for educational reforms whose focus was on the education and practice of teachers. From this concept, attempts were made to extract any evidence that teachers educated as reflective practitioners would be able to handle different problem situations in the context of their work. It was not considered that, to do so, substantial changes would be needed in these conditions and different aspects of the relationship between teaching and learning in classrooms and the educational process as a whole should be considered (Miranda, 2005).

The appropriation of the concept of reflective teacher can be seen in both the National Curriculum Guidelines for the Education of Basic Education Teachers' at the level of higher education (Brasil, 2002), and in the National Curricular Guidelines for Education of Early Childhood Education Teachers and those for the early years of Elementary School at a high school level (Brasil, 1999). These documents, respectively use the following expressions related to the work of teachers: "action-reflection-action" as a special educational strategy for resolving problem situations (Brasil, 2002, art. 5º) and "the concept of a reflective teacher" which is indispensable for questioning and autonomous and ethical thinking in relation to interventions in the profession that is practical and contextualized (Brasil, 1999, p. 30).

Arce (2001, p. 264), in an introductory analysis to the *Pedagogical Curricular Framework for education of early childhood education teachers and those of the Initial Grades of Elementary School* – draft paper (Brasil, 1997) –, among other documents, draws attention to the fact that the theories that concern the education of teachers as a reflective being need to be better analyzed so that their ideologies and philosophies become clear. According to the author, what we have seen is the harmonization of these theories with a neoliberal education policy that can lead to rushing teacher education and the exacerbation of pragmatism and utilitarianism.

In addition to the issues underlying the concept of reflective teacher, it seems to have embraced the possibilities of thinking and expanding the concept of teachers as researchers based on their originality. This is why, to speak today about teachers as researchers leads us to the reflective teacher, action research, research about practice itself and other similar issues. This fact leads us to consider, as Nóvoa (2001, p. 2) highlights, that the different names that characterize the teacher-researcher are based on the same paradigm, namely, the reflective teacher paradigm whose purpose is to educate teachers who think, reflect on their own practice and develop strategies based on this practice considering their school reality as an object of research, reflection and analysis.

Nevertheless, a concept as open as the teacher-researcher/reflective teacher, treated as a binomial, can serve any educational agenda (André, 2005, p. 57) and this is what we have seen in recent years regarding teacher education in Brazil.

TEACHER-RESEARCHER, REFLECTIVE-TEACHER OR WHAT? NOTES FOR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Regarding the motivation for the emergence of the concepts of teacher-researcher, which was allied with action-research, and reflective-teacher, one notes that the concepts have radically different origins. It is also noted that they were conceived in an attempt to elucidate different professional circumstances that also have different goals.

Action-research was the terminology used to name a movement of English teachers in the 1960s, who were changing the curriculum in the school context and spurred action-research in education. This change stemmed from concerns about the relevance of school subjects to students' lives, so that their studies were not taken

as something uninteresting. It was a process in which teachers saw their practice as a place to construct hypotheses about the most appropriate way to make their students become interested in the knowledge conveyed by school and that, once proven, they could lead to the construction of a curriculum theory. As Elliott (1993, p. 156) affirmed, “from the point of view of my professional background, I found the activity of curriculum theory development among school teachers”. Therefore, there was a direct and objective concern for the education of students.

In Brazil, the term action-research was used to denominate a movement that originated in the experience of teachers who realized that the theories that had been the basis of their initial training were insufficient to foster educational practices for students from different socio-cultural contexts. When they took undergraduate teacher education courses, such as CPM in the city of Rio de Janeiro, these teachers began to demand that the theoretical explanations they were presented meet the needs of public education. This led some sectors of the teacher colleges to reconsider their own production to respond to these demands. A statement reconstructed by Senna (2003, p.104), faithfully illustrates and summarizes the needs of a teacher-student: “Look, if you don’t tell me how this stuff is going to help me when I’m teaching, I’m sorry, but I’m leaving, because I’ve got better things to do”.

It is possible to see that the teachers movements portrayed in Senna’s (*idem*) article sprang from their needs to assist their students. Both movements, in England and Brazil, were based on school contexts and expanded to the academic context, notably in the educational field, and called for a review of its principles. However, this review, yet to be consolidated, must be conducted in a way that recognizes the opportunities schools provide for students, reaffirming them as knowledge producers.

The concept of reflective teacher, however, was based on the studies in which Donald Schön (1983) made clear that the practice of engineering, architecture and design professionals, beyond the tacit knowledge that leads them to handle routine situations, also has a necessary reflective component that enables them to solve new problems, thus expanding a repertoire of solutions that once rethought and described verbally, may characterize a theory. From this, Schön proposes a tutored education and learning in action to form reflective practitioners in these fields, considering that the learning derived from them “involves a particular type of learning by doing that should be mediated via the dialogue between tutor and student” (Campos; Pessoa, 1998, p. 194).

These proposals were transferred to serve as a basis for the education of “teachers as reflective professionals” (Schön, 1992). As in the previous case, there is no movement from schools which extended to the academic realm.

While Schön’s ideas gained space in the educational context, even opening doors so that the works of Stenhouse (1975), Elliott (1991), and others became public (Lüdke, 2001, p. 81), the teachers movement, which led to the emergence in England of the concept of teacher as researcher and action-research in education itself was incorporated into the concept developed to explain the practice of a reflective practitioner.

Although it has helped spread the idea that the teacher is a knowledge producer (Lisita; Rosa; Lipovetsky, 2005, p.108), this pluralization of the concept, contributed very little to the initial state of the first initiatives of what was regarded as action-research in England and Brazil. According to Senna (2003, p. 103): “Since the first initiatives of ‘action-research-action’ until today, there have been many other names, such as ‘action-research practices’, ‘reflective-research’ etc., whose contribution to the initial state that led to the movement was very small”.

Elliott (1991, p. 27) similarly affirms that, based on the English movement, other ideas emerged in the academic context that departed from that practice, such as “there can be no curriculum development without teacher development,” “educational action-research”, “teaching as a form of educational research”, including “teachers as researchers”.

The theory that allowed the construction of the concept of reflective-teacher, in terms of its external and internal suitability, offers coherence and support “in” and “for” the field in which it developed and was first presented by Schön (1983). By trying to translate it to education, specifically for the field of teacher education, the theory begins to show weaknesses, particularly in its external aspects, because it ignores the limits of its applicability in situations that differ essentially from the professional practice in which it emerged.

The practice of teachers involves the training of different social subjects that develop to have their uniqueness considered and respected. No one, especially in Brazil, has the desire to develop to be like others, “but to build a third one, formed with a bit of each one and a bit of originality” (Senna, 2007b, p.224). Furthermore, the context in which this practice develops is intercultural, diverse, and plural, and so are the individuals for whom it is intended.

Without considering these aspects, difficulties in maintaining any theories that are developed “in” and “for” the educational field arise. This is the case of the concept of reflective-teacher, which, given its nature, appears not to be suitable as an explanatory theory for education, and reveals that it involves a logic of knowledge production that tends to be allied to rushed training projects and make teachers almost exclusively responsible for education in school contexts.

Nevertheless, the teachers movements are characterized as the outline of a theoretical construct that may be appropriate for education. Based on them, one finds a possibility to (re)configure the concept of teacher-researcher in the realm in which its internal and external coherence is evident.

Based on these movements, even as a delineation to be strengthened and/or rewritten in certain aspects, a concept of teacher-researcher can be traced as part of a research process in which:

- (a) There are teachers or teachers and researchers, who as the producers of knowledge that they are, seek to understand the nature of educational phenomena due to the learning needs of students and their human development;
- (b) Interculturality and plurality are considered as inherent in society and to the individuals that develop within it;

- (c) Reflection is conceived as a human process that takes place, individually and collectively, in search of understanding of the different social, psychological, emotional, political and educational aspects.

In the reappraisal of the movements described here and of the principles related to them, one can find a framework to build theories that support the work of teaching for the social subjects who are in found in schools today.

REFERENCES

- ANDRÉ, M. E. Pesquisa, formação e prática docente. In: _____. (Org.). *O papel da pesquisa na formação e na prática dos professores*. 4. ed. São Paulo: Papirus, 2005. p. 55-67.
- ARCE, A. Compre um kit neoliberal para a educação infantil e ganhe grátis os dez passos para se tornar um professor reflexivo. *Educação & Sociedade*, Campinas: CEDES, ano XXII, n. 74, p. 251-283, abr. 2001.
- BRASIL. Ministério da Educação. *Referencial pedagógico-curricular para a formação de professores da educação infantil e séries iniciais do ensino fundamental*. Brasília, DF: MEC, 1997.
- _____. Ministério da Educação. *Resolução CEB n. 2, de 19 de abril de 1999*. Institui Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais para a Formação de Docentes da Educação Infantil e dos anos iniciais do Ensino Fundamental, em nível médio, na modalidade Normal. Brasília, DF: MEC, 1999.
- _____. Conselho Nacional de Educação. Conselho Pleno. Resolução CNE/CP n. 1, de 18 de fevereiro de 2002. Institui Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais para a Formação de Professores da Educação Básica, em nível superior, curso de licenciatura, de graduação plena. *Diário Oficial da União*, Brasília, DF, 9 abr. 2002. Seção 1, p. 31.
- CAMPOS, S.; PESSOA, V. Discutindo a formação de professoras e de professores com Donald Schön. In: GERALDI, C.; FIORENTINI, D.; PEREIRA, E. M. A. (Orgs.). *Cartografias do trabalho docente*. Campinas: Mercado de Letras, 1998. p. 183-206.
- CASTRO, A. M. Mudanças tecnológicas e suas implicações na política de formação do professor. *Ensaio: avaliação e políticas públicas em educação*, Rio de Janeiro: Fundação CESGRANRIO, v. 13, n. 49, p. 469-486, out./dez. 2005.
- CHECKLAND, P.; HOLWELL, S. Action research: its nature and validity. *Systemic Practice and Action Research*, Netherlands: Springer, v. 11, n. 1, p. 9-21, 1998.
- DICKEL, A. Que sentido há em se falar em professor-pesquisador no contexto atual? Contribuições para o debate. In: GERALDI, C.; FIORENTINI, D.; PEREIRA, E. M. A. (Orgs.). *Cartografias do trabalho docente*. Campinas: Mercado de Letras, 1998. p. 33-71.
- DUARTE, N. As pedagogias do “aprender a aprender” e algumas ilusões da assim chamada sociedade do conhecimento. *Revista Brasileira de Educação*, Rio de Janeiro: ANPEd; Campinas: Autores Associados, n. 18, p. 35-40, 2001.
- ELLIOTT, J. *La investigación-acción en educación*. Madrid: Morata, 1990.
- _____. *Action research for educational change*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 1991.
- _____. *El cambio educativo desde la investigación-acción*. Madrid: Morata, 1993.

- _____. Recolocando a pesquisa-ação em seu lugar original e próprio. In: GERALDI, C.; FIORENTINI, D.; PEREIRA, E. M. A. (Orgs.). *Cartografias do trabalho docente*. Campinas: Mercado de Letras, 1998. p. 137-152.
- FLEURI, R. M. Intercultura e educação. *Revista Brasileira de Educação*, Rio de Janeiro: ANPEd; Campinas: Autores Associados, n. 23, p. 16-35, maio/ago. 2003.
- FRANCO, M. A. S. Pedagogia da pesquisa-ação. *Educação e Pesquisa*, São Paulo: Faculdade de Educação da Universidade de São Paulo, v. 31, n. 3, p. 483-502, set./dez. 2005.
- GERALDI, C.; FIORENTINI, D.; PEREIRA, E. M. A. (Orgs.). *Cartografias do trabalho docente*. Campinas: Mercado de Letras, 1998.
- GINZBURG, C. *Mitos, emblemas, sinais*. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1989.
- HERNÁNDEZ, F.; VENTURA, M. *A organização do currículo por projetos de trabalho: o conhecimento é um caleidoscópio*. Porto Alegre: Artmed, 1998.
- LEWIN, K. Action research and minority problems. *Journal of Social Issues*, Malden: Wiley, n. 2, p. 34-36, 1946.
- LIBÂNEO, J. C. Reflexividade e formação de professores: outra oscilação do pensamento pedagógico brasileiro? In: PIMENTA, S. G.; GHEDIN, E. (Orgs.). *Professor reflexivo no Brasil: gênese e crítica de um conceito*. 6. ed. São Paulo: Cortez, 2010. p. 53-79.
- LISITA, V.; ROSA, D.; LIPOVETSKY, N. Formação de professores e pesquisa: uma relação possível. In: ANDRÉ, M. E. (Org.). *O papel da pesquisa na formação e na prática dos professores*. 4. ed. São Paulo: Papirus, 2005. p. 107-127.
- LÜDKE, M. O professor, seu saber e sua pesquisa. *Educação & Sociedade*, Campinas: CEDES, n. 74, p. 77-96, 2001.
- _____. *O que conta como pesquisa?* São Paulo: Cortez, 2009.
- MATTOS, C. L. G. Etnografias na escola: duas décadas de pesquisa sobre o fracasso escolar no ensino fundamental. In: _____.; FONTOURA, H. A. (Orgs.). *Etnografia e educação: relatos de pesquisa*. Rio de Janeiro: EdUERJ, 2009. p. 11-29.
- MIRANDA, M. G. O professor pesquisador e sua pretensão de resolver a relação entre a teoria e a prática na formação de professores. In: ANDRÉ, M. E. (Org.). *O papel da pesquisa na formação e na prática dos professores*. 4. ed. Campinas: Papirus, 2005. p. 129-143.
- NÓVOA, A. *Os professores e a sua formação*. Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 1992.
- _____. *Matrizes curriculares*. [set. 2001]. Entrevista concedida ao Programa Salto para o Futuro. Rio de Janeiro, TV Escola (MEC). Disponível em: <http://tvbrasil.org.br/saltoparaofuturo/entrevista.asp?cod_Entrevista=59>. Acesso em: 19 abr. 2009.
- PEREIRA, E. M. A. Professor como pesquisador: o enfoque da pesquisa-ação na prática docente. In: GERALDI, C.; FIORENTINI, D.; PEREIRA, E. M. A. (Orgs.). *Cartografias do trabalho docente*. Campinas: Mercado de Letras, 1998. p. 153-182.
- PIMENTA, S. G. Pesquisa-ação crítico-colaborativa: construindo seu significado a partir de experiências com a formação docente. *Educação e Pesquisa*, São Paulo: Faculdade de Educação da Universidade de São Paulo, v. 31, n. 3, p. 521-539, set./dez. 2005.

- _____. Professor reflexivo: construindo uma crítica. In: _____.; GHEDIN, E. (Orgs.). *Professor reflexivo no Brasil: gênese e crítica de um conceito*. 6. ed. São Paulo: Cortez, 2010. p. 17-52.
- PORLÁN, R.; MARTIN, J. *El diario del profesor: um recurso para la investigación en el aula*. Sevilla: Díada, 1997.
- RIBEIRO, D. *O povo brasileiro: a formação e o sentido do Brasil*. 3. ed. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2008.
- SACRISTÁN, J. G. Tendências investigativas na formação de professores. In: PIMENTA, S. G.; GHEDIN, E. (Orgs.). *Professor reflexivo no Brasil: gênese e crítica de um conceito*. 6. ed. São Paulo: Cortez, 2010. p. 81-87.
- SENNA, L. A. *Orientações para elaboração de projetos de pesquisa-ação em educação*. Rio de Janeiro: Papel&Virtual, 2003.
- _____. O conceito de letramento e a teoria da gramática: uma vinculação necessária para o diálogo entre as ciências da linguagem e a educação. *Documentação de Estudos em Linguística Teórica e Aplicada (DELTA)*, São Paulo: Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo, n. 23, p. 45-70, 2007a.
- _____. O problema epistemológico da educação formal: a educação inclusiva. In: _____. (Org.). *Letramento: princípios e processos*. Curitiba: IBPEX, 2007b. p. 149-169.
- _____. Formação docente e educação inclusiva. *Cadernos de Pesquisa*, São Paulo: Fundação Carlos Chagas; Campinas: Autores Associados, v. 38, n. 133, p. 195-219, jan./abr. 2008.
- SILVA, E. C. Críticas à formação do professor reflexivo: uma questão de paradigmas. *Olhares e Trilhas*, Uberlândia: EDUFU, ano 9, n. 9, p. 85-94, 2008.
- SCHÖN, D. *The reflective practitioner*. Nova York: Basic Books, 1983.
- _____. Formar professores como profissionais reflexivos. In: NÓVOA, A. (Org.). *Os professores e a sua formação*. Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 1992. p. 79-91.
- STENHOUSE, L. *An introduction to curriculum research and development*. Londres: Heinemann, 1975.
- _____. *Investigación y desarrollo del curriculum*. Madrid: Morata, 1981.
- TRIPP, D. Pesquisa-ação: uma introdução metodológica. *Educação e Pesquisa*, São Paulo: Faculdade de Educação da Universidade de São Paulo, v. 31, n. 3, p. 443-466, set./dez. 2005.
- THIOLLENT, M. *Metodologia da pesquisa-ação*. São Paulo: Cortez, 2011.
- ZEICHNER, K. M. Para além da divisão entre professor-pesquisador e pesquisador acadêmico. In: GERALDI, C.; FIORENTINI, D.; PEREIRA, E. M. A. (Orgs.). *Cartografias do trabalho docente*. Campinas: Mercado de Letras, 1998. p. 207-236.
- _____. Uma análise crítica sobre a “reflexão” como conceito estruturante na formação docente. *Educação & Sociedade*, Campinas: CEDES, v. 29, n. 103, p. 535-554, maio/ago. 2008.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

TATIANA BEZERRA FAGUNDES has a doctorate in education from Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ).
E-mail: tatianabfagundes@hotmail.com

Received August 2013

Accepted April 2015