FROM WORK TO TEACHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The study focuses on work as a path toward personal realization, in the case of compulsory education teachers, as a starting-point for their training. Teaching, a job seen as easy, actually involves a great many difficulties, reflected as challenges to the training of future teachers. Some of these challenges are examined, as is the contribution of authors such as Nóvoa, Saviani, Tardif, Lessard, Dubet, Vincent, and Labaree, who have studied the topic, seeking to focus on the real work done by teachers as an inspiration for teacher education. Teacher education, today a responsibility of universities, is marked by a strong accent on the theoretical aspect, while practice comes a distant second. Attention to the work carried out by teachers may help bring teacher education closer to the needs of future teachers. This is why an effective partnership between the two teacher-educating institutions, universities and schools, needs urgently to be built.

TEACHER EDUCATION • EMPLOYEMENT QUALIFICATIONS • LABOUR • UNIVERSITIES

In a lecture given at SINPRO/SP, in 2008, António Nóvoa, that great specialist in the history of education and the teaching profession, referred to Dewey and reflected on teacher training: "there is a lack of practice in teaching training" (p. 8). Dewey, Nóvoa goes on to affirm, was explaining that reflection on teaching practice is essential. For the purpose of our own analysis of this text, these statements are very thought-provoking, since we are going to address the links between teacher training and the practical experience gained by teachers as they work. We are convinced that the preparation of teachers-to-be, currently the responsibility of universities, is in fact lacking on the practical side, since universities are more concerned with theoretical training. Our reflection is guided by acknowledgment of the importance of work experience in building every professional's identity. In the case of teachers, work itself is one of the principal means of realizing their function, role, job, responsibility, or mandate, as Mellouki and Gauthier (2004) put it—in other words, part of teachers' lifelong personal realization. As Nóvoa (1992) aptly points out, work and life go largely hand in hand for teachers, in a vital commitment that has been well summed up by Christopher Day's beautiful expression (2008): *committed for life*. In the same 2008 Conference, Nóvoa goes on to confirm that: "Teacher-training today is very much a prisoner of traditional models, very formal theoretical models, that give little importance to practice and reflection upon it. This is a huge challenge for the profession, if we are to learn to do things another way" (p. 8).

This is the challenge that we seek to address by means of an analysis underpinned by teachers' work and practices, as a source of inspiration

to guide proposals for the training of future teachers, undoubtedly in combination with the theoretical discussion provided by training efforts at universities.

TEACHING, A JOB THAT LOOKS EASY...

David Labaree, an American sociologist of the University of Stanford, provides a critical analysis of the problems faced in the effort of training future teachers, focusing mainly on the work carried out by Education Schools, the institutions responsible for this training. Although his concern is directly with the situation in his own country, his analysis—in his provocatively entitled book, *The trouble with Ed. Schools* (2004)—contains points of convergence with problems we face in Brazil. In Labaree's words: "Training teachers is actually very demanding, mostly owing to the complexities of the teaching profession as a form of professional practice. The underlying problem is this: teaching is extremely difficult work, that looks easy" (p. 39).

We shall track his analyses, seeking points of convergence with Brazilian problems. One of the first problems identified by the author is the dependence on the participation and collaboration of the client. Unlike other professions where "service" can be provided by the professional and "delivered" to the client who will pay for it, in the case of teaching, as in such professions as psychotherapy, the "service" will only be completed (in other words the work will only be successful) if the client performs his or her part well. In teaching this is an essential aspect, since the task of teaching, the core of the teacher's work, will not have been completed if there is no learning on the part of the student. Portuguese researcher Maria do Céu Roldão (2007) found a very apt way of summing up this thorny relationship by suggesting that the teacher's work is not actually teaching, but leading people to learn. The delicate dependence of the teacher on his or her "clients" is thus well described. Furthermore, Labaree points out that the clients are mandatory clients, since it is laid down in law that children must attend school, under the responsibility of teachers of compulsory education. The challenge of turning these children into citizens, of working to "institute the nation" (*les instituteurs* as teachers of this level of schooling were formerly and elegantly denominated in France) is a clear indicator of the complexity of the job.

This huge responsibility, of which the founders of education sociology such as Dürkheim (1893) in France and Waller (1932) in the United States were well aware, falls on the shoulders of teachers at this early stage of formal education, with its inevitable burden of emotion, which Labaree reminds us must be managed as yet another problem. It is the teacher's task to introduce the group of young people for whom (s)he is responsible to that particular society's cultural world, seeking to reconcile the disparate stages at which (s)he –the teacher – and the group itself find

themselves, as the group comes to him or her full of energy and entirely open to all the impressions they receive, and must be channeled towards certain points, certain goals, certain products or fruits, which is in itself a challenge for the teacher, as philosopher Rabindranath Tagore so aptly put it as early as 1924: *It is like forcing upon the flower the mission of the fruit. The flower has to wait for its chances* (p. 15). The ability to harmonize the different rhythms of two generations requires a charge of energy and emotion on the teacher's part which is essential in the construction of his or her profession. Two recent studies clearly bear this out: Freund (2009) and Boing (2008) studied highly-committed teachers working in the compulsory education setting, in different periods (Freund) and in different teaching establishments (Boing), mixing interviews with observation; they found that these teachers placed great importance on their relations with the students. The positive emotional charge in this relationship was seen as essential in keeping them committed to the profession – which some of them had been exercising for over 30 years – and enhancing their self-realization.

Alongside the emotional issue, the teaching profession also suffers the effects of structural isolation. The exercise of this profession in the intimate setting of the classroom reinforces the idea of self-training or professional development, predominantly hinging upon daily practice and lessons learned individually, in an attempt to overcome hurdles faced, sometimes with the help of a more experienced colleague or through recalling the example of "good teachers" they had when they were children themselves. As Lortie (1975) teaches us, the issue is retroactive professional socialization, where the present-day beginner ends up reproducing solutions adapted to very distinct circumstances and conditions. The belief that "the teacher constructs him or herself", in an isolated individual effort, is a major contributor to the undervaluing of the training of future teachers, of educational theory, and of the teaching profession itself as a whole, as Labaree (2004) points out. The complexity of the educational field and of the educational phenomenon itself, which is not a well delimited epistemological framework and therefore requires the contribution of several disciplines if it is to be understood, also reinforces this trend. This has repercussions for the role and contribution of training, as well as for research itself in the field of education, challenged by issues relating to the availability and effectiveness of findings.

The impression that the job of teaching seems easy carries in its wake a number of consequences for the challenge of preparing future teachers. The coexistence of present and future teachers during many years – in Brazil approximately fifteen on average – establishes a tacit zone of understanding of the teaching profession, shared in fact by all those who have enjoyed this coexistence, even if they did not become teachers, but who as parents, grandparents or mere members of the community feel authorized to suggest solutions and put forth opinions on a range of problems concerning teaching. This learning by observation, however,

hides a series of limitations, perceived and discussed by Lortie (1975) and well analyzed by Labaree (2004). While students come into close and frequent contact with teachers – something that does not happen with the other professionals they meet in their childhood and adolescence, such as doctors – there is an inaccessible face, hidden to observation, although this does not constitute the impenetrable mystery characterizing certain professions. Teachers are continually presenting and revealing themselves to their students, but the latter do not have access to the whole set of thoughts, reflections, elaborations, decisions and even actions that precede the activities teachers do with their students. "Learning by observation shows them (the students) a great deal about what teachers do, but virtually nothing about why they do it", writes Labaree (2004, p. 57). Here we have one of the first challenges to be faced in a teacher training program. We must go beyond the apparent evidence of an activity that is easy to carry out, geared toward teaching basic stuff in the public domain that everybody knows – such as reading, writing and counting. This "easy stuff", however, must be learned by all students and this remains a challenge, virtually a mystery, for beginner teachers. As Labaree puts it: "Ask student-teachers on teacher-training programs and they will say that they have learned too much about theories of curriculum and pedagogy and not enough about class control, the thing that most worries them about preparing to teach" (p. 43).

Observations such as these make us realize that the problem of training future teachers is not only a Brazilian one, especially as concerns preparing for teaching. This has led us to propose writing a set of texts, one of which is this one, on the importance of taking into consideration the work actually carried out by teachers in compulsory education as the central issue to inspire their training, an axis that has already been put forward as the basis of a doctoral course in one of the authors' fields: Education (Lüdke). The new direction, starting out from the job itself in order to reflect upon training, may be a counterpoint to the path normally taken by such programs, going from training to the job itself. Thus the school arises as the central setting where teaching is actually carried out, although the environment where teaching occurs is also much more wide ranging. We clarify the importance of taking the work done by universities in training these future teachers into consideration, thereby ensuring the construction of the foundation for a theoretical and methodological discussion of educational problems, building the reflective side that is essential for training teachers, as Dewey affirmed.

TEACHING: A SPECIFIC JOB

Apart from addressing an issue that everyone involved in training teachers for compulsory education is familiar with, universities still have to face certain other problems related to the nature of the knowledge that teachers are expected to master. The fact that this knowledge is in the

general domain does not make it easily assimilated by everyone, although the law lays down and society expects that it should be. One begins to hear an expression that quickly and simply indicates the vast complexity of the task falling to those teachers responsible for the so-called initial grades of compulsory education: "teaching everybody everything". How is one to prepare teachers to take on this task? Summarizing the expression, the word "everything" encapsulates the above-mentioned basic knowledge that constitutes the initial platform that is indispensable for the development of the slow process of building citizenship, which is the responsibility of all. And the word "everybody", in the first half of the expression, also expresses in a simple fashion this huge difficulty of reaching out through learning to all the children, something still done in Brazil within the school setting, through schools in the public network where 90% of students at this level of schooling are found. The apparent ease of this task is quickly overturned when beginner teachers, full of concepts and theories, face their first class, and at the end of the year find that they have been unable to "cause" even half of their students "to learn", if that many. Turning to the training they received at University, these teachers may well ask themselves, why didn't they tell me that this was how it would be? They can only find out how it would be by seeing how it is, in other words, by actually taking on a work situation personally, or vicariously through contact with teachers in their work. This remains a challenge throughout the training process offered by universities.

The role of teaching experience, put forward as a means to link the University (in its task of the initial preparation of future teachers) and the school (as workplace and continued training for these teachers) has not yet been clearly defined. Discussion and investigation of this important stage in the process of training are still open, the hope being to detect experiences and studies that will shed light on this fundamental link in the process. One of the present authors is seeking to gain enhanced first-hand experience of the problems faced by the main protagonists in supervised teaching experience. The problems of the trainees, and of the practicing teachers who welcome them into their classrooms, of the tutors who guide them at University, and of the school itself as a whole have already been studied (LÜDKE, 2012b). The research is continuing by following up the experiences of strategies aiming to reconcile theoretical training and practical experience, to broaden the specific study of problems from the perspective of each of those involved, who currently lack this attention in their preparation for a more effective teaching experience (LÜDKE, 2012a).

Difficulties in dealing with this type of general knowledge in preparing future teachers has been a challenge for universities for a long time, and particularly for the Education Schools and Pedagogy Courses responsible for teacher training courses, where teachers are trained for the different subjects of the compulsory education curriculum. Within this scenario one can see an essential separation, with far-ranging consequences, even in the building of a professional identity by teachers

at this level of education. Those who will devote themselves to specific subjects follow teacher training courses corresponding to them, and those who will end up "teaching everybody everything" are trained by the Pedagogy teacher-training course. Here one begins to see future teachers approaching the different subjects they have chosen, which will have an important weight in defining their professional identity (as teachers of English, History, or Mathematics, for example). Those who take Pedagogy and will "teach everybody everything" do not have a clear definition of the specific knowledge for their field of work, and their future professional definition is therefore also vague. Teachers of the different subjects are directly influenced by the departments these subjects are connected to, and Education Schools responsible for the Pedagogy course are hostages to these departments or to a certain extent subordinated to them, in the definition of the proper knowledge for teachers of each discipline. The Pedagogy course is responsible for the delicate task of defining, demarcating, exploring, composing, defending, proposing, and in fact underpinning the knowledge corresponding to that general function which introduces all children to the basic knowledge, which is as important as it is difficult to determine. This implies specific preparation in a range of subjects rather than the training of a generalist teacher.

This thorny and undervalued function falls to Education Schools; it is undervalued in comparison with other functions deemed more valuable within the setting and culture of the University. Such is the case of research, whose value meets the eye immediately, bringing with it prestige and resources to the University, as was made very clear in a study on teacher training coordinated by Candau (1988). Her findings are still very up-to-date, the situation of teaching degree courses today is still very similar to what it was then. Several lessons were taught by the highly thought-provoking study – which one of the present authors (Lüdke) took part in – and which yielded well-known fruit. One result was the increasing value given to research in teacher training and in education in general, which has developed greatly since then, with a vast output in terms of publications and scientific events. Master's and Ph.D. programs in education have multiplied, which has contributed to this development.

Education Schools still therefore occupy a background position in university life. Not only in Brazil, as becomes clear from Labaree's above-mentioned work, with its bold title (*The trouble with Ed. Schools*). Speaking from within one of the most highly respected American universities (Stanford) and a School of Education that has been ranked number one in that country, the author courageously and clear-sightedly points out aspects that have hindered the construction of a positive view of education schools, for reasons that seem inherent to the area of education and to the task of training teachers, as we have said. Despite the well-founded criticism that he carefully directs at these schools, Labaree completes his analyses with a positive view of them and puts forward a surprising suggestion which is, however, ultimately coherent with the analyses he

develops. The failures identified are largely explained by the difficulty caused by such institutions occupying the boundary between theory and practice, between university and the outside world. The author therefore suggests that the work of *Ed. Schools* should concentrate on the value of use rather than the value of exchange, so common in universities that are hard pressed today by market forces:

> The mistake that the critics have made is in taking us at our word instead of watching us in action, in listening to teachers talk about their practice instead of observing what they do in the classroom. (LABAREE, 2004, p. 193)

> Let us consider for a moment what would happen if we decided to abandon the status perspective to establish the value of higher education, the perspective which American universities and their clients latch onto so obsessively. What if we chose to focus on the social role of Ed. Schools, instead of their social position in the academic firmament? What if we examined what these institutions do, instead of how they are seen? (LABAREE, 2004, p. 201)

Encouraged by Labaree's view, we also wish to suggest that Brazilian Schools of Education more boldly take on the role for which they have been preparing themselves for a long time, in the specific field of Pedagogy and Didactics. We are aware that these are two fields whose clear definition has been lacking for decades (and not only in Brazil) but we also see that the task that falls to them has been faced with effort and courage by those dedicated to these fields, and what Labaree has said of the United States is also happening to these people in Brazil: what they do is more valuable and important than how they are perceived in the academic scene. Not being quite integrated into these fields (Pedagogy and Didactics), and as the authors of this text, we acknowledge the specificity of the knowledge developed in the Schools of Education and stress its importance for a teacher training closer to the needs we have identified.

TEACHER TRAINING AND ITS HISTORICAL ISSUES IN BRAZIL

Teacher training in Brazil has suffered many setbacks throughout the course of its history, as is made clear by an analysis produced by Dermeval Saviani (2009), which we follow here. Ever since the beginning of an institutional basis for this training through schools dedicated specifically to it – the so-called "Normal Schools" or *Escolas Normais* – the pattern that would come to dominate this training became clear, hinging on a concern with mastery of the knowledge to be transmitted. The setting up of

Institutes of Education in Rio de Janeiro (1932) and São Paulo (1933), under the inspiration of Anísio Teixeira, also bears this stamp, although it seeks to meet the needs of Pedagogy, "which aimed to set itself up as a scientific expertise" (p. 146). Experimental schools were attached to these institutes, which enabled them to develop a research and practical experimentation basis. But this basis was lost when the Institutes of Education were attached to the University of São Paulo and to the Federal District University, with the organization of training courses for secondary school teachers established under Decree-Law 1190, enacted in 1939, which inspired the model known as "three-plus-one" that was adopted thereafter in teacher training and Pedagogy courses. Within this scheme, three years of the course are dedicated to a study of the specific subjects, and one year to the didactic training. This scheme is known to be prevalent throughout the reforms and alterations that the teacher training system underwent in Brazil, and its consequences have been widely analyzed by a large body of literature. We briefly introduce the issue because of its importance for our theme, as is well shown by this statement by the author whose work we recommend to those who wish to go deeper into the matter:

> The pedagogical issue, absent initially, slowly spread until it occupied a central position in reform attempts of the 1930s. However, it has not yet found a satisfactory direction. At the end of the day, what proves permanent over the six periods under analysis is the precarious nature of training policies, whose successive changes failed to establish a minimally consistent standard of teacher preparation to address problems in school education in Brazil today. (p. 148)

Saviani's important analysis (2009), which we merely mention here, opens the gate to pathways in pursuit of resources that take as their starting point the trajectory through time of Brazil's teacher training system and lead it to address the challenges we still face owing to a (fortunately!) ever-growing clientèle in our schools and to the new setting in which teachers have to work.

Nóvoa's lecture in 2008, mentioned in the opening of this text, bears in its very title, "Nothing can replace a good teacher", a message courageously repeated by him in several of his works and presentations such as that in Lisbon in 2007 entitled "The return of the teachers". Very many authors dedicated to teacher training and the teaching profession have addressed this issue of bringing the teacher back to the center of the educational setting (which in reality (s)he never actually abandoned), but Nóvoa has been one of the most persistent, denouncing the present-day paradox of teachers being on the one hand burdened with a great responsibility for addressing challenges posed to basic education for all, without on the other hand being able to enjoy the resources that

are indispensable for the task. Contributions come from a range of perspectives and researchers seeking to clarify the problems assailing the teacher in his or her central position. Tenti-Fanfani (2005) analyses the situation of the teacher, marked by circumstances and factors that go to make up what he calls the *condición docente* (2005). The author, by means of this expression, has helped us understand the framework within which elementary and secondary school teachers' work is carried out in several Latin American countries, with which he is extremely familiar. With very few exceptions, teachers have to overcome significant hurdles – inherent to their position as teachers – to do their jobs in these countries, and yet without presenting a negative position overall vis-à-vis their profession. In a recently published study we analyzed the situation, stating that although it was fraught with difficulty, it nonetheless contained signs of possible improvement (LÜDKE, BOING, 2012).

Tardif, Lessard and Lahaye (1991) instituted among us a concern with recognition of the specific expertise of teachers, and have been working actively with problems that afflict teachers in their work. Pressure from society, pushing new responsibilities upon teachers that were formerly assumed by other institutions such as the family or the Church, is one such problem that the authors claim steals space from actual teaching work. Teaching is harmed, while tasks far removed from those that are teachers' specific expertise and responsibility multiply, as Tardif and Zourhal (2005) write. Apart from this competition with other tasks, Tardif (2000) is also concerned with the massive intrusion of technology into the lives of teachers and schools. In a study on the division of teaching work, Tardif and Levasseur (2010) join the debate on school institutions, on the basis of an analysis of the participation of a number of teaching aids in school, without however representing an encroachment on the teacher's specific field of operations. These aids, according to the authors, cover students' needs that are not met by the teacher's actions but which are deep down part and parcel of teaching, which goes beyond instructive work, prioritized by the school and its rules. They argue that this supplementation by the assistance of technical experts, shows the school opening up to a more effective participation by the student in his or her own education. A satisfactory balance has not yet been established between the use of technological resources by teachers and by students, without this constituting an encroachment on either party, within their legitimate right to receive (and transmit) information, alongside the right to evaluate, interpret, criticize, contradict or even reject this information, wholly or in part. These are things that only the teacher can do, as Mellouki and Gauthier (2004) rightly point out in analyzing the teacher's mandate.

Among contributions from a range of French sociologists on the complexity of teaching, we highlight Dubet (2002) and Vincent, Lahire and Thin (1994), as bearing directly upon problems in training future teachers, our topic in this text. Dubet has, in several of his studies, worked on issues linked to teachers and their experiences of teaching and to the school as an

institution, where this work is carried out. In this controversial issue, he calls into question some institutions that are fundamental to our society, and posits society's decline in three major domains: education, health and social service. For our purposes, the author's analyses in the field of "work and the other" are particularly interesting, characterizing professions included within the three above-mentioned domains, although also present in jobs in other domains. The institutional character involving this type of work has important implications for the professional group and the individuals making it up, with repercussions for the job itself. Dubet studies the revolution undergone by the institutions supporting these jobs, in particular how it is seen by sociologists. There are those who focus more on the general aspect of the job in its consequences and "objective" functions, distancing themselves from professional practices and the meaning that the agents themselves ascribe to them. From this perspective, says the author, "the real work disappears behind the objective work, or the conception that the sociologist has of it" (p. 11). In another perspective, linked to interactionism, work about the other is seen as a continuous strategic activity, and studied more from the point of view of how it is done than what it is for. Its study focuses on limited contexts (the classroom, the hospital service) and, says the author, "real work deletes the prescribed work" (p. 12). More recently, another perspective brings together studies of the sociology of professions, which focus on work as an organized collective action, with groups marked out by professional barriers and identities, or by changes brought in the wake of new competencies that destroyed the old professional bases. Continuous changes that the author considers as over-hastily attributed to neoliberalism have shaken old institutional and bureaucratic frameworks, introducing new modes of management, leading "studies on schools, hospitals and social services to be driven by a reflection on new professionalities and their modes of regulation" (p. 12).

Dubet's whole analysis in this work (2002) seems highly relevant for our perspective of the issue of the teacher's work, but we would like to highlight one of his conclusions because it is so closely linked to the purpose of this text:

> The set of observations made throughout this study leads me to resolutely defend the *métier*. The more the actors depend on a *métier*, the more serene is their experience of work, as in the case of adult trainers and trainers of *instituteurs*. The more their *métier* becomes an impracticable ideal, as with teachers (of secondary school), a mere self-presenting as in the case of mediators, or in the localized construction as in the case of nurses, the more likely to be painful is their experience of work. The problem of the *métier* must not be mistaken for that of qualifications and competencies. Initially it implies that the work is "objetivable" and that the

> professional be able to say: this is my output, this is the result of my activity, I can show and demonstrate this. [...] I must repeat, I am not talking here of profession, but *métier* understood as the ability to produce something, know it and make it known. (p. 392-393)

The work of Vincent, Lahire and Thin (1994) proposes a metaphor even in the title, in the shape of a question full of suggestions for reflections on our topic: *L'éducation, prisionnière de la forme scolaire?* Throughout the work, the authors discuss and analyze issues pertaining to this theme, but in the opening chapter, which gives its name to the book, they work more directly upon it. This chapter has been translated into Portuguese and published in the journal *Educação em Revista*, of the Federal University of Minas Gerais, in 2001.

Although its roots have been sought by several historians of education as far back as the Greeks, through the Middle Ages, the "*forme scolaire*/school form" as we know it began to be part and parcel of the educational system in Western societies from the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries. Vincent, a historian who has made a great contribution to the history of education in France, along with his sociologist colleagues, Lahire and Thin, carefully analyses the process by which school, as an institution, slowly consolidated, and how the school form gradually took shape and finally became confirmed in the present. Together they draw attention to the difference between the institution and the form, which is important for their analysis and for understanding the point they arrived at in their conclusions. The school, as an institution, gradually responded to pressures and injunctions that society itself imposed on it, seeking to meet the most urgent needs of an ever-growing clientèle. Society's problems and struggles, and the repercussions of this for school, have been well analyzed by the authors, who engage in a dialog on these points with researchers not only from the area of history but also of sociology, such as Roger Chartier and Pierre Bourdieu.

A set of features pertaining to principles, standards, values, space-time components, subjects and curriculum, as well as administrative aspects such as evaluation, and the admission and granting of diplomas to students, and the resources and strategies peculiar to the field of pedagogy and didactics, all this was gradually bundled into what slowly took shape as the "school form". It is almost commonplace to state that this form remains surprisingly current, bearing most of its original features. Our authors confirm this impression and push forward in their analyses, which bear out the growing importance of the school and of schooling, imposing upon society "the predominance of the school mode of socialization (which) manifests itself by the fact that the school form has gone far beyond the frontiers of the school to pervade numerous institutions and social groups" (VINCENT, LAHIRE, THIN, 2001, p. 39). They reach an apparently paradoxical observation, based on which they propose a hypothesis: "the

school form, the school mode of socialization dominates socialization, but the school as institution is contested, its pedagogical monopoly and that of its teachers are carved up, threatened..." (p. 46) and this monopoly is threatened, however, owing to the "pedagogical effectiveness" achieved by the school, say the authors. It is the "success" of the school institution, expanded by the work of the school to the socialization process of new groups, that now turns against it (p. 47).

The analyses of Dubet (2002), Vincent (1994) and Vincent, Lahire and Thin (2001) call into question the school as institution without, however, distancing it from the important role it continues to play within the educational scene. Dubet questions the institutional component, not only in the field of education, and acknowledges that this component is today in inevitable decline. However, he gives great importance to the *métier*, particularly that of the teacher (*l'instituteur*), insisting that it should "belong to the individuals, that it be owned by them and not evaporate at the slightest change in the organization or the environment. It is to the *métier* that the defense of a subject possessing something more than a mere relation to itself belongs" (p. 393). We should remember that the author makes it clear that he is referring to the *métier*, not to the profession. We note that by establishing this distinction he avoids becoming involved in a set of issues concerning the difficulty of classifying teaching among professions acknowledged as such by students of the issue. We also prefer to avoid these difficulties here, and we take his statement concerning the importance of the *métier* as clear support for our confidence in the core role of the work of the teacher in the perspective of teacher training.

The assumption of Vincent, Lahire and Thin about the power of the "school form", going beyond the school institution and even becoming the underpinning of a critique of the school itself, as we see today, also strengthens our arguments, since the several forms that grew outwards from the "school form" replenish themselves from the "pedagogical effectiveness" (2001, p. 46) and are closely linked to the teacher's pedagogical work.

After commenting on the weakening of the strong institutional model, suggested by Dubet (2002), Tardif and Levasseur (2010) state that despite this weakening "the school remains and continues to play an overwhelming role in the plane of socialization, although it undoubtedly plays this role differently from how it used to prior to massification" (p. 179). The authors insist on the specific participation of technical assistents in this opening process within the school institution and put forward a timely suggestion gathered from a study by Rayou and Van Zanten (2004) on young teachers. The work of young teachers, they say, has more pragmatic action than that of more experienced teachers, since they seek to do what is possible here and now for the student, even if this is limited to class time, seeking to ensure small advances. The idea of school excellence gives way to the idea of educational success, say Tardif and Levasseur (2010).

WORK IN THE CORE OF THE ISSUE

The contributions of those French sociologists presented here help make up a setting in which the difficult task of the teacher unfurls, and the school is still the place where their role is most often performed. We have seen, in the suggestions of Vincent, Lahire and Thin (2001) above all, that there are other stages beyond the school where the educational scene is played, although bearing the "school form" mark. We have seen, with Saviani (2009), in a historical perspective, how the training offered by the very institution responsible for preparing future teachers – the university – has not yet managed to balance theoretical and practical components, or form and content, which are indivisible and essential to this preparation. Although we have benefited from the author's analyses and suggestions, we question the strategy he proposes as a solution to the problematic situation. Based on the statement that in order to recover the indissociability between these components "it will be necessary to consider the teaching act as a concrete phenomenon, that is to say, how it is actually carried out within schools", with which we entirely agree, Saviani proposes beginning with textbooks, using them as a "starting-point for the reformulation of Pedagogy courses and other teacher-training courses", assuming that for better or for worse "they are the bridge between form and content" (2009, p. 151). Insofar as textbooks are aimed at the largest possible audience, they must necessarily reduce their information to the most-generalizable minimum, sacrificing most of the concepts, inquiries and queries. Let us not forget that it is the teacher who carries out the teaching act as a concrete phenomenon.

Our proposal rests upon the work actually done by the teacher in his or her school, in his or her classroom, as a source of orientation for proposals for the training of future teachers. We must focus our sociological gaze upon the real work done and not on what is prescribed, always bearing in mind that teaching is undergoing transformations. Although schools' organizational structures and curricula remain hostage to the school form, the constant entry of new generations of students questions the rationality of current preparation of teachers for this work, even the type of training that has worked up until now. Teachers who seek to do a good job need constantly to excel themselves and reinvent themselves. Teachers actually live in a state of permanent construction of professionality.

Professionality is related to specific contributions from the work factor. It is about the teacher's capacity to intervene as an active agent in the teaching-learning process, and about knowing how to interpret what happens in this process and knowing how to make it happen. It brings into play the affective dimension and personal talents on the one hand, and the social construction of the teacher's work on the other. It brings together components from training with those of work performance, always in comparison with a collective benchmark within the occupational group. All of these meanings fit the perspective of professionality as something

continually evolving, since expectations are not completely met. However, given the incompleteness to which the term refers, we must be attentive to the risks that undue appropriation of professionality may bring to this work and to the training of teachers, as we stated in a previous study (LÜDKE, BOING, 2010).

First of all, one must be attentive to the risk of a lightened version of initial training. Universities, who took the task of training teachers upon themselves, have been accused of academicism and lack of attention to preparation for real working conditions. We can see a trend toward hastening the initial training process and leaving the preparation for work to the schools themselves, in an on-going, in-service manner. Thinking in terms of professionality, a sound initial training is increasingly necessary, perhaps more so than in the days when a good qualification was enough to exercise a single job all the way through to retirement. Profissionality demands a large measure of personal initiative, the ability to work in a team, interdependent roles and the development of interaction. All of these things demand an ability to reflect and adapt to different conditions. The better the initial training, the greater will be the capacity to reflect and adapt.

Perception of reality and an ability to adapt depend largely upon the personal characteristics of each teacher. Thus, another risk that is run when thinking about the job in terms of professionality is to imagine that the problem of preparing for the job may be solved by reducing the training to the development of skills. In the most widely disseminated view of competency, it is commonly accepted that it is made up of at least three basic dimensions: knowledge, skills and attitudes. The risk is that of separate attributions: the domain of knowledge to universities; that of specific skills and attitudes to the teachers themselves. All training agencies are responsible for the three dimensions. Both universities and schools, developing skills, encompass the entire cycle. In fact, one only sees the acquisition of a new skill when the future teacher, while still at university, or the novice teacher, in a school, takes on the attitude corresponding to the knowledge and abilities specific to the competence being developed. One cannot demand attitude from the teacher alone. It is the fruit of a process of socialization that depends on environments of learning of knowledge and acquisition of skills, in training and work.

Despite all the risks and difficulties involved, we believe that the idea of professionality aligns with our discussion of teaching work and the training of teachers. The term has been disseminated in studies throughout the world and we have been affected by it. In the meaning we have received from the sociology of professions, particularly from the French School of sociology, professionality is a bridge between pre-professional and professional aspects per se, until then separated by initial training. In this meaning there is a consensus among experts that the professional socialization of teachers begins a long time before so-called initial training. The experiences that teachers had when they themselves

were students, from the early years of primary school, help construct their professionality. Statements by teachers who claim to have been inspired by their own masters or who even chose the profession after being attracted by the work of their own schoolteachers, are commonplace.

In a study carried out among itinerant teachers, those who work simultaneously at more than one school, Boing (2008) found a positive relation to work. Given the precariousness of their working conditions, he was surprised by their positive accounts of their relational experiences at school, since he presumed that these teachers, working in several schools, would enjoy a bond with none. Several teachers said that schools were excellent places to work: they would be the best place of all if teachers did not have to ensure and monitor learning and everything that this activity implies in the present organization of the school, such as evaluation, which is always mentioned as being problematic. By this, they meant that the drawbacks of the teaching job were limited to the rituals, such as the liturgy of evaluation, which they criticize. If their job was merely to teach, they affirm that there would be no better place to work, because the work of teaching is "pure personal and generational relations" (BOING, 2008). The same study demonstrated the complexity and the concreteness of these relations constraining the work of teaching. One of the teachers studied—João, traveling from one school to the other in a frenzied rush against the clock and dodging traffic jams on the streets of Rio de Janeiro—was told by his doctor to monitor his blood pressure for a continuous 24-hour period. He was to carry out normal daily activities with the device strapped to his body. He found that his heart rate during class was almost as relaxed and steady as when he spent time with his children at home at the end of the day.

In the initial training given by the University, we see the basis for reflective intellection on experiences, and in the teacher and his or her work we see a real possibility for linking what one expects students to learn and the strategies to achieve this. We do not rule out—quite the contrary, we include—the preparation provided by the University as a key component for teachers' training, with its body of knowledge on theories, concepts, methods, strategies, resources—everything, in fact, pertaining to the field of education that the teacher-to-be should know. Specific preparation for research work, which will accompany future teachers throughout their careers, even if they will not personally ever carry out a study under their entire responsibility, is an inherent part of this task of the University's. We have dealt with this issue on the number of occasions (LÜDKE, 2001a, 2001b; LÜDKE, 2008a, 2008b; LUDKE, 2009; LÜDKE, 2011). As to the training that higher education institutions have been offering to future teachers, it could not possibly represent complete preparation, even if only initial preparation. The purpose of these institutions does not encompass the experience of the practical side that is indispensable to this training, as happens in some professions such as medicine, well-known for assuring future professionals of a passage through practice of the basic skills making up

a doctor's training. Some other professions, such as Dentistry and Law, are equipping themselves to offer their future professionals a preparation that better balances the two basic components. We know that in our field – education – we face a range of difficulties inherent in the nature of the fields, as has already been discussed, especially by Labaree (2004), but we believe that even within the somewhat narrow confines of teacher training courses, several improvements may be introduced in order to fill gaps that are visible today even to lay people's eyes, and in order to do this, we give priority to turning our gaze to teachers' real work.

TURNING BACK ONE'S GAZE TO TEACHERS' REAL WORK

Antonio Nóvoa drew our attention to the need to bring teachers back into the center of the educational stage, calling for "The return of the teachers" – *O regresso dos professores* (2007). We turn to him once more, with suggestions to cover what he himself called the "deficit in practice" in University training of teachers. In a 2009 article he makes yet another good contribution, announced in the title itself: "Toward a teacher training constructed within the profession". He focuses specifically on the training of teachers in his own country, Portugal, which is carried out in three stages: a) Basic teacher training in a given subject (*licenciatura*); b) a Master's Degree in Education, with a strong didactic, pedagogical and professional reference, and c) a probationary period of professional induction. We have already seen that there are striking structural differences separating Brazil's training system from that of Portugal. Two points deserve immediate observation owing to their absence: the demand for a Master's Degree in Education after the *licenciatura*, and a probationary period of professional induction. We shall seek to highlight some of Nóvoa's suggestions that we deem compatible with Brazil's current teacher training schedule, since our position is very close to the argument he puts forward in his study: "the need for a teacher training constructed within the profession itself" (2009, p. 2).

Referring to the long debate between theory and practice in the field of education, Nóvoa acknowledges that there has not yet been "a reflection enabling transformation of practice into knowledge". The training of teachers remains guided more by external references than by references that are internal to the work of teachers, and as he states: "it it is essential to reverse this long tradition and institute professional practices as a place of reflection and training" (2009, p. 4). Nóvoa also puts forward the example of medicine, as always happens whenever people wish to show how training that brings theory and practice together may occur. Regarding the profession, the author states his case clearly: we must "return the training of teachers to the teachers" (2009, p. 5). The complexity of teaching can only be mastered on the basis of integration within its professional culture. The contribution of research, confirming training

processes, only makes sense if the processes are constructed within the profession. We emphasize the importance of an approximation between the teacher and research, which we have worked on (LÜDKE, 2008a, 2008b; LÜDKE, 2011; LÜDKE, CRUZ, BOING, 2009). Nóvoa also draws attention to the need to base the training on the logic of follow-up, in situ training, analysis of practice, and integration into the professional culture of teaching. As in the case of Portugal, Brazil does not have a professional induction period, and the responsibility for attempting to bridge this gap falls on our supervised internship period, which has been unable to solve the issue satisfactorily, as we are currently finding out through study (LÜDKE, 2012a). Nóvoa also addresses a component that consistently figures in his works: attention to the personal dimension in the teaching profession, and he goes so far as to propose a "theory of personality within a theory of professionality" (2009, p. 7). In another item, named Sharing (*partilha*), he focuses on a training of teachers that values teamwork and the collective exercise of the profession. He insists upon the notion of the school as the place for training teachers, the space of shared analysis of practices, with systematic follow-up to supervision, and reflection on practical teaching activities, in order to build professional know-how. As his last item Nóvoa (2009) sets out the principle of social responsibility that should characterize the training of teachers, aiming at public communication and at professional participation in the public space of education. The profession's presence in public opinion, somewhat faded or even distorted today, needs to be reintroduced in training courses, since "a profession's prestige is measured largely by its social visibility" (p. 9). He concludes his text incisively:

> Essentially, I advocate a teacher training constructed within the profession, that is to say, based on a complex combination of scientific, pedagogical and technical contributions, but which is anchored on the teachers themselves, above all on the more experienced and acknowledged teachers". (NÓVOA, 2009, p. 9)

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE SITUATION OF THE TEACHER

In recent decades the job itself has been the focus of the attention of sociologists of education, who have used the categories developed by sociology of work to seek to understand the work of the teacher as a crossing-point of crucial factors in the make-up of the teaching profession. For our own reflections in this text, the analysis from this perspective, as we seek to apprehend the relation between the work actually carried out by teachers and the necessary preparation for those who intend to devote themselves to this activity, makes a very timely contribution. The

researchers seek to approach what is being understood as real work, as opposed to the prescribed work, focusing on the activities carried out by the teacher in his or her habitual scenario, inside the school, as actors and subjects in their working situation. The expression "situated work", based on the Latin *in situ*, has been used as a result of the dissemination of works of sociology, above all produced by French authors Some of these have already been translated and are circulating in Brazil, such as those of Yves Clot (2006) and Marc Durand and others (2005).

The analysis of teachers' activities seen close-up, in their daily activities in the classroom, with their students, school, with their colleagues, offers many opportunities to observe what really happens and how, in teachers' work. One can, as it were, open up the "black box", as mysterious as it is attractive, in parallel to the macro-sociological analyses that showed us so much in the 1970s. Claude Lessard, in a text from 2009, with his view as a sociologist interested in teacher training problems, sketches an overview of changes in a number of schools of thought that have studied teachers' activities from this perspective, highlighting their strengths and their weaknesses. Concern for actual work and for flesh-and-blood people doing it has helped education sciences to distance themselves from norms and prescriptions, says the author. "In a field traditionally dominated by normative pedagogical theories, this focus on work is an important stage in the development of education sciences [...], but for this to happen they must welcome the contributions of different approaches and disciplines" (LESSARD, 2009, p. 126).

Focusing on the teacher, as a cognizant subject who is able to feel emotions, who acts under tensions in a situation that is structured and yet open in a significant measure, enables advances to be made in knowledge of hitherto scarcely explored aspects or aspects confined to isolated subject domains. Within a reality that is socially and culturally constructed, there is action and interaction between and among several players, and in the center of the stage are the teacher and his or her students. This in-situation approach has sought to unveil how these subjects, by simultaneously taking into consideration the demands and constraints inherent in the situation (programs, curricula, norms, settings and other elements characteristic of the "school form"), but by also being attentive to the undeniable role of creativity and initiative proper to the teacher and his or her students, make up what the researchers call configurations. There are a considerable number of unpredictable aspects in every classroom and there is an important component of creativity and initiative within the teacher's jurisdiction. He or she acts as an individual, as a member of a community (of a time, of culture, of a *métier*), having received a given training and making use of resources learned during the training and from others, as an active subject, making his professional way, and seeking fulfillment from his or her work, to which knowledge the contributions of sciences such as sociology and psychology are essential. It it is even possible that, in the domain of the study of the practice of teaching, these

two sciences cross-fertilize each other, says Lessard, who deems this study necessary for the initial and ongoing training of teachers. For him, this study "is at the core of any project to professionalize the profession. Much more than macroscopic analyses, analyses of the activity are extremely relevant in the training of teachers and in the construction of a reflective professionality" (LESSARD, 2009, p. 126).

The statement of Claude Lessard, based on a painstaking and detailed analysis of studies of the practice of teaching, as has been the object of study of several groups of researchers (2009), comes down to us as a strong contribution to the argument developed in this text: the importance of homing in on the (real) work done by teachers, in pursuit of suggestions to bring the initial training offered to future teachers by the university closer to the needs they will have when working in schools. As a sociologist with vast field research experience in teacher training, his statement has special weight, given a certain resistance that can still be felt against the study perspective largely coming from the community of educational researchers. It is precisely from the side of the sociologists that the most visible resistance is concentrated, possibly because they see in this type of approach the traces of a perspective limited to a micro-analytical view of the work done in schools, disconnected from the social and cultural reality in which schools exist. Lessard's analysis leaves no doubt as to this connection, very clear in the strands analyzed by him. A warning he gives at the end of his article makes clear his concern about the possible risk incurred by promises based on the above-mentioned studies, since current educational policies, based on the autonomy of establishments and on the professionalization of the teaching profession, tend to "hold teachers responsible and might blame them for failures of the education system" (LESSARD, 2009, p. 126). This is a real risk, but teachers' responsibilities are actually much greater: for the work of education as a whole, especially that carried out in schools – as Casalfiori, Bertone and Durand (2003) state in a reference chosen by Lessard himself.

> This approach enables conviction as to the possibility of operating in the classroom, despite certain strong and resistant drivers, particularly sociological ones. Affirming autonomy (limited albeit essential) for school situations, one implicitly produces the postulate that it is possible to fight against specific school failures, and train teachers in the basis of consideration of real practices. Thus these teachers are privileged actors in the construction of these articulations in class and are therefore responsible for their development and effectiveness. (CASALFIORI, BERTONE, DURAND, APUD LESSARD, 2009, P. 96)

In this scenario, we insist on highlighting the role of teachers and their work taking on responsibilities and preparing to face them. Despite difficulties and problems, which are faced in any profession, the real job of the teacher has both possibilities and constraints. Future teachers, in their preparation at University, will benefit from direct experience of this work, through which they can come to be familiar with possibilities and constraints as well as paths taken by the practice of experienced teachers, which is part and parcel of their training. As researchers and trainers both at university and in basic school, we strive to bring students closer to the real-world work of teachers without focusing too much on the risks, making it seem a virtually impossible mission. Along with the teachers, we hope for ever-improved results.

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