



## The I Professor Formation in the Wallonian approach\*

Formação do eu professor na abordagem Walloniana  
Formación del yo profesor en el abordaje Walloniano

Ana Lúcia Batista Aranha<sup>1</sup>, Leny Magalhaes Mrech<sup>2</sup>, Adriana Pereira Gonçalves Zacharias<sup>3</sup>, Luana Prado Figueredo<sup>4</sup>,  
Catarina Terumi Abe Mendonça<sup>5</sup>, Maria de Fátima Prado Fernandes<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Master's in Science, School of Nursing, University of São Paulo, São Paulo, SP, Brazil.

<sup>2</sup> Associate Professor, Department of Teaching Methodology and Comparative Education, School of Nursing, University of São Paulo, São Paulo, SP, Brazil.

<sup>3</sup> Master's Degree Student, Graduate Program in Nursing Management, School of Nursing, University of São Paulo, São Paulo, SP, Brazil.

<sup>4</sup> Master's Degree in Nursing in Adult Health, School of Nursing, University of São Paulo, São Paulo, SP, Brazil.

<sup>5</sup> Nurse of the Regional Nursing Council of São Paulo, São Paulo, SP, Brazil.

<sup>6</sup> Associate Professor, Department of Professional Orientation, School of Nursing, University of São Paulo, São Paulo, SP, Brazil.

### ABSTRACT

**Objectives:** Analyze how teachers perceive the construction of their I Professor from the perspective of Wallon and learn about their everyday experiences in school in the condition of being self and other. **Method:** Qualitative, with 13 participants from the Bachelor of Nursing Program. Data collection was carried out in 2013 using interviews that were subjected to thematic analysis. **Results:** Three categories emerged: Construction of the I Professor; living daily life supported by oneself and the other; and the components for constructing the I Professor, highlighting consciousness and valuing of oneself and the other. **Conclusion:** The teachers traveled a path that allowed them to recognize themselves in different movements of the internalization of the I.

### DESCRIPTORS

Faculty; Education; Nursing Education; Interpersonal Relations; Cognition.

Correspondence Addressed to:  
Maria de Fátima Prado Fernandes  
Av. Dr. Enéas de Carvalho Aguiar, 419,  
Cerqueira César  
CEP 05403-000 - São Paulo, SP, Brazil  
fatima@usp.br

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## INTRODUCTION

The construction of the training of teachers is related to how they perceive themselves compared to their peers, communicate their ideas, identify their own values, and exchange and produce knowledge with other professionals from different areas of knowledge. This space of growth includes cultural, social, cognitive, attitudinal, and affective aspects.

Teachers as professionals have identity and training, while being individuals, which is a result of their interactions with the environment, conflicts, and social agreements, whose functional cognitive, affective, and motor domains are always present<sup>(1)</sup>.

In his studies on development, Wallon recognizes the individual as a whole, though unfinished and in constant becoming. He argues in his theory that the main function of development is individuation, which means the formation individuals with their own identity.

This construction takes place through the continuous process of becoming teachers, encompassing the relational and the inter-relational. It also implies deconstructing perceptions about the self and creating new ways of perceiving it. In this context, teachers can work on the construction of the I Person based on their individual characteristics according to their own life story, but not independent of what was *apprehended* in and by the social.

This study emphasizes Wallon's psychogenetics, which studies persons and their relationships with others and the environment in way that is contextualized and integrated with the reality in which they are inserted.

Wallon was born in Paris in 1879 and lived there until his death in 1962. His life was marked by intense intellectual production and active participation in the events of his time. Before entering psychology, he spent time in philosophy and medicine in a trajectory that influenced the formulation of his theory. Throughout his career, his approach to education was increasingly explicit<sup>(2)</sup>.

His dialectical psychogenic concept of development provides a broad basis for understanding human beings as whole persons, helping to overcome the classic division of mind/body present in Western culture and its multiple implications<sup>(3)</sup>.

The Wallonian psychogenic approach sought to understand the development process by proposing a link between affection, intelligence, and action (behavior). It refers primarily to persons who seek throughout their evolution to differentiate themselves in the affective and cognitive sense, guided by the evolution of consciousness of self and other<sup>(4)</sup>.

Wallonian theory states that the other and emotion are part of the construction of the I. One can understand that emotion is social and biological, and it provides development and establishes emotional ties that permeate the construction process.

It is emotion that fosters passage from the organic to the social and from the physiological to psychological<sup>(4)</sup>. Wallon writes that "emotion is therefore the starting point of the psyche, of consciousness, and of social life since it is through it that the first exchanges with the human en-

vironment will take place, the first links of meaning, and subsequently the process the fundamental difference between self-other"<sup>(4)</sup>.

When referring to the role of the other in the consciousness of the I, it can be conceived that "The associate or the other is a perpetual partner of the I in psychic life"<sup>(5)</sup>. "The other is fundamental for the construction of the person, for the recognition of self before the other. The I and the other express ideas, values, and attitudes in the world where they exist"<sup>(3)</sup>. From their joys and sorrows they become aware of themselves, thus causing a new I to be born different from the already existing I. When the I and the other interact, they are changed and complement each other. So, the individual, who is considered essentially social, is also understood genetically, since the social is already registered in the biological as a fundamental need<sup>(4)</sup>.

Based on these assumptions, this study presents ideas about the teacher's world related to the construction of the I Professor.

In this regard, this study is justified, since it is able to contribute to teachers coming to think about themselves in relation to the other in their workplaces. The psychogenic theory of Henri Wallon is the conceptual basis for this study, since it provides valuable contributions to the understanding of the development of the person and the construction of the I Professor. This makes it possible to understand the interactions that teachers can establish with the other in their daily work tasks.

The hypothesis of the study is that the I Professor formation takes place from the perspective of formation that is built in relation to the other. Teachers realize that their professional growth takes place among their peers. But not all are conscious of how they experience this process in relation to the other, creating the I Professor. From this proposition, the following question arose: How do professors perceive themselves in the school environment in the context of social relationships and interactions?

The objectives of this study were to analyze how teachers perceive the construction of their I Professor from the perspective of Wallon's theory and understand teacher experiences in their daily school tasks in the condition of being the self and the other.

## METHOD

An exploratory study with a qualitative approach, adopting as a theoretical framework of analysis the Wallonian psychogenic approach.

The subjects were 13 teachers from different areas of knowledge who teach courses in the Bachelor's degree program in Nursing in a private educational institution. Inclusion criteria: being a teacher who has worked at least two years in the program and having two continuous years as a teacher in higher education.

The data was collected in the second half of 2013 using two instruments: forms to obtain information about the teachers and semi-structured interviews. The interviews had five guiding questions: Tell me about your daily life as a teacher in this school. Tell me how this journey has helped

you in your growth. Tell me how you perceive yourself as a teacher in this school. Share how you have perceived your growth as a person together with the other people in this school. Describe how you perceive the construction of your I Professor in the school with your peers.

The locations for the interviews met the privacy expectations of the participants. On average they lasted 30 to 45 minutes and were all audio-recorded and transcribed in full by the researcher, while keeping confidentiality. The transcribed and recorded interviews were stored electronically. All subjects were receptive to participating in the study.

The authors decided to use the content analysis technique, working with thematic analysis. This analysis consists of discovering the units of meaning that make up a communication whose presence or frequency have value for the analytical objective intended<sup>(6)</sup>. The analysis consisted of several stages: preanalysis - comprehensive reading of responses; exploration of the material - identification of units of meaning that were related to the components for the construction of the I Professor; and treatment of results and interpretation - separation of the units of meaning that could check and dialogue with the theme presented.

The study complied with the ethical and legal requirements of CNS Resolution 466/2012 of the National Health Council (CNS), which deals with the ethical aspects of research involving human subjects (National Health Council, 2012)<sup>(7)</sup>. It was submitted to and approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the USP School of Nursing (CEP/EEUSP) under Opinion No. 375,840.

To maintain the anonymity of the subjects, responses were identified by letter and number; for subject P01, P corresponds to "professor," and the numbering follows the order of the interviews carried out by the researcher.

## RESULTS

### CHARACTERIZATION OF THE SUBJECTS

The teachers were trained in the areas of health, education, and philosophy; there were 4 nurses, 2 biomedics, 1 psychologist, 2 pharmacists, 1 physical therapist, 3 nutritionists, 4 educators, and 1 philosopher. The time since graduation ranged from 5 to 22 years, teaching experience was from 4 to 20 years, and average age was 30 to 50 years old. There were two teachers with lato sensu graduate studies, 1 in area of management and 1 in mental health. In stricto sensu there are 6 masters and two doctorates: - 3 master's in education, 1 master's in nursing, 2 master's in health sciences, 1 doctorate in nursing, and 1 doctorate in psychology.

In the interviews we found that the theoretical framework was not known to all the teachers. Two had more affinity with the framework, given their background in philosophy, sociology, and pedagogy.

### THE CATEGORIES

Three categories were identified from the statements of the teachers: construction of the I Professor; living daily life based on self and other; and the components for constructing the I Professor.

## CONSTRUCTION OF THE I PROFESSOR

The category "construction of the I Professor" showed that teachers become teachers in a continuous process, a difficult task and requires support for its internal movement and also requires that teachers develop new tools of thinking, feeling, and, above all, getting to know themselves.

*I presented some projects that I believe were important for the formation of nurses (...) I feel that this can help in everyone's growth. Beyond adding to the student's education, it builds me up as a person because they are projects that bring me a sense of personal achievement (P01).*

*My growth has taken place through the exchange of experiences with my colleagues, who have helped me learn how to position myself in the classroom so as to deal with my insecurities, which led me to grow as a person and a teacher. Without this space of exchange, this construction would not be possible (P05).*

*As a person, the exchange of knowledge makes me grow, the experiences with students (...) lead me to reflect on my I (...) and what I know is that I can't forget the human side, affection, and respect for the other (P08).*

The statements indicated that participating in projects can aid in the formation of students and teachers. It is noteworthy that there is a commitment on the part of teachers to the formation of students, as well as to their own formation as persons, which is part of the construction of the I Professor. The exchange of knowledge involves communication and interaction with others, leading to growth for everyone.

The perception of interactions with people at school helps teachers to become more aware in their pursuit of the I. Sharing knowledge makes it possible for them to look at themselves based on their own attitudes and the attitudes of others.

*Undoubtedly the school has had an impact on my academic career and growth as a person, but the largest contribution has come from the students. To have experienced and faced constant challenges made it so that approaching the other favored my growth as a person (P03).*

*My career at school has given me and continues to provide moments of growth and learning, both professionally and personally. This is because contact with each other makes the search for new knowledge necessary, establishing new contexts and new transformations (P07).*

In their professional life, teachers reported the importance of exchange with the other, being open to the new, to new knowledge. This enables personal and professional growth. It is possible that throughout their professional life teachers will better observe their growth as persons and as teachers through interaction and openness to self and other, with the possibility of opening themselves to self and other.

*I notice myself maturing and experiencing personal and professional growth, I believe that over time this will strengthen because the school is a good atmosphere for this (P09).*

*I had always heard that we learn with practice and the practice really does teach us not only the subject matter itself, but also relationship with people, the perception of our actions with the environment and everything around us (P08).*

These statements show that the interaction among acquiring knowledge, maturity, and personal and professional growth is sustained and supported by practical activities developed in the workplace. This results in knowledge that is not restricted to learning content, but is above all learning to relate, opening spaces of equilibrium for teachers to recognize themselves in their evolution as persons.

One teacher mentioned that it is positive to be able to experience moments that may not be good. The quality of these moments can bring lessons about how to work with the unpredictable, and from this extract new, rich learning. Another referred positively to the realization of being a teacher.

*Learning to share good times and bad times is also part of this growth, because we don't learn only with what is positive and good. We also learn with diversity, which is a large area of learning (P10).*

*My I Professor has been developing for a long time, beginning with my own experiences as a student, observing my teachers, thinking of the good models that I intended to follow, and avoiding the attitudes and behaviors that I considered unproductive for my growth. The realization of being a teacher involves relationships with other people, which I think is very positive, and this all has to do with my motivation for work (P01).*

The teachers express the importance of interacting with their peers in their spaces of exchange and growth, which through sharing experiences creates possibilities, bringing maturity that is solidly based on personal and professional enrichment. This interaction with the other can also lead to personal satisfaction.

#### LIVING DAILY LIFE BASED ON SELF AND OTHER

This category refers to how teachers perceived elements in their daily life that relate to becoming teachers, making it possible to identify how their professional development takes place, and how it is associated with or assists in growth as a person.

*Some people have helped me to be what I am. A human being who is better able to understand the other, be more tolerant and flexible. This construction is not easy. It is daily, constant, and only possible if there is a giving of oneself (P12).*

*As a teacher I acquired flexibility and gained maturity and experience. I grew as a person, and that*

*gave me more confidence; it helped me strengthen my professional identity to the point of getting more involved in my field of knowledge (P04).*

There are several possibilities for developing ways to strengthen the I person. Humans, as whole beings, in all their life processes, develop in accordance with what they produce, share, and receive in daily life, in order to become more and more sociable. To do so, people should develop qualities that are achieved gradually, acquiring confidence.

*As a person I feel I am useful and happy, as a human being who seeks and interacts with the common good. I read somewhere that in the construction of the person we actually do not create ourselves, but are grown. So we lean more toward being grown than being created (...) Everything is a process of interaction with other people. I feel happy collaborating and being respected by my colleagues (P01).*

To cultivate something, people need to acquire knowledge and improve what they already know, whether in the cognitive, instructional, or affective spheres. This is not simple, because it requires a movement of coming and going permeated by different moments and states of consciousness. This may give rise to a need to find a way to organize new occurrences or goals, either individually or collectively. In this way, people cultivate their lives, while being cultivated by the other, in their daily activities.

*Creation is not an easy process. I am creating myself all the time (...) It has been a great learning experience, especially learning from the differences with what is new, and what conflicts with me. Today, I find myself to be different, more flexible, more considerate. I learned that the other is part of my development and evolution as a person (P08).*

*My construction of the I Professor throughout my career has developed from the exchange of experiences with peers, through training and educational meetings. Not just exchanges with peers, but through them, I was able to create myself because I have my own characteristics and some I mirror from others (P02).*

Even though teachers have opportunities to value their ideas, feelings, and actions in their daily lives, it is they who will give meaning to new behaviors in their professional actions. This especially allows them to alter their attitudes toward themselves and others. Growth occurs when these changes are accompanied by other means that may redirect their lives in the social and emotional context with repercussions in their personal and professional fields.

#### COMPONENTS FOR CONSTRUCTING THE I PROFESSOR

In this category, the analysis shows that the components to create the I Professor coexist in the environment in which persons are inserted, in relationships that lead to choices, conscious or not, in times of personal change and discovery permeated by different situations and challenges. Their behavior that may open up possibilities for experiencing the new for themselves, leading them to

look at their evolutionary process, feelings, and emotions in another way.

Guided in this reality, they can acquire new tools to work on their difficulties in the social sphere. Along the way, they need to make some decisions that are inherent in their professional growth process. This can also occur consciously or not, but even so, it can bring new cognitive and emotional attributes that strengthen their personality.

*I feel accomplished professionally (...) At times I have to deal with questions, but I believe that by contributing to the training of students I also contribute to my own training (P02).*

*I believe that people are essentially social beings. In this sense, it [the I Professor] develops gradually, creating its own history, which means that it is the subject of its own actions in situations that need to be transformed, and because of this people will always need the other (P07).*

*I always try to participate in everything that I believe is important in helping to build me up as a professional and a better human being (...) such as sharing experiences, because I believe that we cannot grow alone; we always need each other even to overcome the difficulties that we encounter during our journey of life (P12).*

*My family supported during my entire professional career and this helped me develop as an authentic and dedicated person (...) to become the person I am today, to be myself. It allowed me to grow professionally and personally (P13).*

These statements indicate that teachers have progressive awareness in relation to growth based on experiences in their daily work. This shows that they are not separate from the I person, having understood the existence of the internalized other.

Family was identified as important in the development of self, representing the other. This helps to provide a foundation for teachers to develop as persons and professionals. Ordinary day-to-day life invested in relationships can give persons a stronger sense of the concreteness of being.

Many components of the relationships that are established in the school can be considered important elements in helping to create the I Professor.

## DISCUSSION

The statements of the teachers showed the relationships and interactions among all categories that involve teachers' work, including cognitive and social aspects, with special attention given to the affective. There was opening for consciousness and valuing of self and other through exchange of experiences, with the possibility of teachers becoming other persons, transforming the self.

Regarding **Construction of the I Professor**, the results reveal that to develop as a teachers, they need to interact with the people who live in the same social space of the school, as well as a set of values, behaviors, and formal and informal standards.

The school is not a group per se, but a means by which groups can be constituted with a varying trend; such groups may be in disagreement or agreement with their objectives<sup>(5)</sup>.

In Wallonian theory, "the concepts of the I, of the person, and of the subject are similar, and the prelude to creating persons is found in their first emotional expressions, which become differentiated and establish a circuit of shared exchanges. The process of differentiating I-other, together with taking on body consciousness, are the foundations for a more specific moment of developing the I and one's own identity"<sup>(4)</sup>.

"The environment is an essential complement to living beings. It is no less true that society puts humans in the presence of new means, new needs, and new resources that increase the possibilities of evolution and individual differentiation"<sup>(5)</sup>. There may be differences in how teachers see themselves and how they learn in this condition as they seek quality in their relationships in order to recognize what they have gained in their development as persons.

The statements of the teachers pointed out that among many opportunities for growth, teachers experience processes of personal and social maturity through contact with peers and themselves. This reality occurs with the exchange of ideas and knowledge based on the dimension of professional actions, and it is possible to nurture development as a teacher in different scenarios of the school world. In this situation, challenges and gains in the perception of self and other can be shared.

In order to be created, the I Professor lives in constant conflict in search of differentiation of I and other. This reality is present in the statements, albeit indirectly, but that express this nature.

The I, to create itself, lives in constant conflict as it tries to differentiate I from other. For Wallon, this conflict leads to the creation of the person. Without it, persons could not create, develop, and transform themselves by incessantly seeking to establish themselves, to recognize themselves as full, complete persons. This occurs in a centripetal movement, because we are always developing ourselves, seeking our construction.

Becoming a teacher is a permanent condition of teaching, permeated with options, knowledge, desires, and possibilities. It is part of a constant "coming-to-be" characterized by the production and growth of the teacher's own work<sup>(8)</sup>.

This discontinuous development can be understood as a coming and going, because there are interruptions in the development process. It is often necessary to reconstruct what has already been created because we are always looking for something, and this search allows us to develop ourselves cyclically, gradually, and unendingly<sup>(5)</sup>.

There is a mix of feelings and desires that create and produce knowledge within the school environment. The teachers cited the need to develop as people, with the other, and to seek satisfaction in their work. Facing new challenges in order to reach personal and professional maturity can bring motivation and enrichment to the sphere of formation of the I Professor.

In this study it was possible to notice how much teachers need the other to form the I Professor, learning to make choices in a growing and continuous search for new answers based on what they learn with their peers and students and in the workplace, reflecting about themselves.

From the statements emerged the possibility that there are differences in the way teachers see themselves and how they learn. This led us to think that there is sensitivity because of the construction of self and other. At this level, teachers need to try to understand how these relationships are processed, recognizing what was apprehended in their construction as persons. Also apparent in some statements was that interacting with peers helps teachers in the construction of the I Professor.

Persons are created, aimed at the self-creation of the subject, and the school should follow this process, offering opportunities for acquisition and expression in which the predominance of the objective and subjective dimensions alternate<sup>(2)</sup>.

The biological will gradually allow space for determining the social. The influence of the social environment becomes more decisive in the acquisition of higher psychological behaviors like symbolic intelligence, because culture and language provide the instruments for this evolution<sup>(2)</sup>.

As for the construction of the I Professor, to develop as teachers, it is necessary to interact with all the people who live in the same social space of the school. Through this space, which is also one of exchange and learning, and along this path, teachers create the I Professor.

As for **Living daily life based on self and the other**, it was noticed that daily living means having permanent contact with the environment, learning to interact and adapt to the new.

Wallonian theory emphasizes that persons are inseparable from the environments in which they are inserted, leading to pleasant and unpleasant relationships that affect them, but are part of their growth.

Human beings are “genetically social,” historical subjects inserted in a certain time and space. Endowed with reason and affection, and embedded in various processes of socialization (family, school, work, groups), they make choices based on representations of their environment, assimilating values while building consciousness of self and the world<sup>(5)</sup>.

The statements revealed that teachers learned from each other as they walked together, discovered their peculiarities while developing other skills that are now part of the I Professor; and on this path they were not alone, but with the other. They had the opportunity to rethink what had been thought and revise their values, visualizing new directions and transformations.

The teachers also mentioned aspects present in relationships that were broken down into actions related to reflection, space for sharing experiences, working with diversity, growing as persons, and transformation. There was an emphasis on respect in the relationship with self and other, and on a commitment to reconsider attitudes.

“The subjects are understood as social subjects who, during their development, become more individualized, become differentiated, and create their personality”<sup>(4)</sup>.

One of Wallon’s main contributions is differential conceptualization of emotions, feelings, and passion, considering all these manifestations as the unfolding of a larger functional domain—affection—without, however, reducing them to each other. He defines affection as a functional domain that has different manifestations that become more complex during development and emerge from a predominantly organic base, until they reach dynamic relationships with cognition, as can be seen in feelings<sup>(9)</sup>.

The statements emphasized growing together, sharing and overcoming difficulties, followed by commitment and affection, expressed in different ways and sometimes indirectly.

The daily life of teachers, based on themselves and on the other, is important because it can lead them to build knowledge in a more conscious way, expanding their knowledge of the internal and external I, which includes the dimensions of affection, psychomotor skills, and cognition, while privileging diversity and respect.

Concerning **Components for constructing the I Professor**, statements emerged that dialogued with each other and were linked to different relationships between people. To speak of teacher construction components is to consider the possibility of identifying those that can be considered the most essential for the construction of the I Professor.

Emphasis was given to interactions in the social environment based on the relationships built by the subject, showing that the entire development process of humans is closely related to experience and the exchanges in these relationships. This process takes place through the impregnated construction and reconstruction of images, values, and ideas that may or may not be recognized by self or other.

Some teachers have awakened the desire to reach changes more delicately. This is essentially present in statements about learning in the field of relationships, which can provide insight into the teacher’s own I.

The statements showed that to create the I Professor, is necessary to have a relationship with the other, the internalized other, “Socius.” In many educational situations, teachers used working tools such as dialogue, reflection, and observation.

It is desirable that consciousness become social, which means that it opens itself to the representation of individuals who are not itself, and that the consciousness should have, however, the same prerogatives that it has.

The construction of the person or the constitution of the subject gives a key role to the symbolic system, to language, and to conflicts themselves, which guides us in our search of an “ever further.” Further on, this can be understood as an unfinished I of an I, which never ceases to seek its differentiation throughout human evolution<sup>(3)</sup>.

This is linked to the way teachers communicate with themselves and the other, how they identify and work on their strengths and weaknesses, and how they take on themselves the rudder that gives meaning to feelings and actions, expressed on behalf of themselves and the other, thus contributing to personal and collective growth.

## CONCLUSION

This study showed a diversity of situations in different contexts of how teachers perceive the construction of the I Professor. The formation of the I was examined from the perspective of Wallon's assumptions. It was found that within the spaces of school, teachers seek growth, and this helps in building and internalizing the I. In learning about self and other, changes occur for both. It became very clear that the I Professor formation is born and reborn from relations with self and other through the exchange of knowledge, fostered by the process of developing and internalizing new concepts and values.

Teachers discussed how they perceive and what they feel about the school environment, creating spaces to be rethought, such as seeking new paths for expanding dialogue and knowledge of self, attitudes exhibited in different contexts. Teachers also valued the way learning is developed, having as its structure human relationships and interactions. The process and lessons learned for life were mentioned, enabling exchange and growth, and commitment to growth itself.

In this study teachers had the opportunity to reflect on their path of getting to know themselves with awareness of how they are created, trying to recognize a little more of themselves in various processes of internalization of the I.

## RESUMO

**Objetivos:** Analisar como o professor percebe a construção de seu Eu Professor na perspectiva de Wallon e conhecer como vivencia seu cotidiano na escola na condição de ser o si mesmo e o outro. **Método:** Estudo qualitativo que contou com 13 participantes atuantes no Curso Bacharelado em Enfermagem. A coleta de dados foi realizada em 2013, por meio de entrevistas submetidas à análise temática. **Resultados:** Emergiram três categorias: Construção do Eu Professor; Viver o cotidiano apoiado em si mesmo e no outro; e Componentes da construção do Eu Professor, com destaque para a conscientização e valorização de si mesmo e do outro, edificando a construção do Eu Professor. **Conclusão:** Os professores percorreram uma trajetória na qual permitiu reconhecer o si mesmo em diferentes movimentos da internalização do Eu.

## DESCRITORES

Docentes; Educação; Educação em Enfermagem; Relações Interpessoais; Cognição.

## RESUMEN

**Objetivos:** Analizar como el profesor percibe la construcción del Yo Profesor en la perspectiva de Wallon y conocer como vivencia su cotidiano en la escuela en la condición de ser a sí mismo y el otro. **Método:** estudio cualitativo, que contó con 13 participantes actuantes del Curso de Bachiller en Enfermería. La recolección de los datos fue realizada en 2013, por medio de entrevistas, las cuales fueron sometidas al análisis temático. **Resultados:** surgieron tres categorías: Construcción del Yo Profesor; Vivir el cotidiano apoyado en sí mismo y del otro; y Componentes de la construcción del Yo Profesor, destacándose la concientización y valorización de sí mismo y del otro, edificando la construcción del Yo Profesor. **Conclusión:** Los profesores siguieron una trayectoria tal que les permitió reconocerse a sí mismo y en los distintos movimientos de la internalización del Yo.

## DESCRIPTORES

Profesores; Educación; Educación en Enfermería; Relaciones Interpersonales; Cognición.

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