



Faculty professional development strategies in public universities: similarities and differences

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ABSTRACT. This study aimed to understand the strategy definition processes in faculty development movements of five Brazilian public universities. Specifically, we wanted to know about the articulation of university pedagogy with different areas of knowledge, describe the strategies developed and realize conditions that facilitate and/or hinder their development. Seven academic administrators involved in the organization and planning of these strategies collaborated in this research. The results revealed that the main strategies used are lectures, seminars and workshops; and that only one of the institutions uses activities mediated by information and communication technologies such as teleducation. The interviewees mentioned that the universities have difficulties in establishing and strengthening pedagogical advisory groups to bring together teachers and staff to address teaching practice issues, given the specificities of the institution. In fact, little was mentioned about organizing and enhancing internal groups for this purpose, which may suggest that they are not relying on specialized researchers or sufficiently considering the literature and experiences in this field. At the end, we point out that further studies could provide more insight into the impasses and their conditioning factors, thus, could help in the development of organizational and programmatic alternatives or innovations to improve teaching and learning processes in Brazilian higher education.

Keywords: lectures; seminars; workshops; teletraining.

Estratégias de desenvolvimento profissional docente em universidades públicas: similaridades e diferenças

RESUMO. Neste estudo buscamos compreender o processo de definição das principais estratégias desenvolvidas pelos movimentos de formação pedagógica em cinco universidades públicas do Brasil. Especificamente, pretendemos saber como ocorre a articulação da pedagogia universitária com as diferentes áreas do conhecimento, descrever as estratégias desenvolvidas e perceber as condições que facilitam e/ou dificultam seu empreendimento. A pesquisa contou com a colaboração de sete gestores que participavam da organização e planejamento dessas estratégias. Os resultados revelaram que: as principais estratégias utilizadas são palestras, seminários e oficinas; apenas uma das instituições utiliza atividades mediadas por tecnologias, como a teleformação; as universidades evidenciaram dificuldades para constituir e fortalecer grupos que congreguem docentes e técnicos para o enfrentamento de questões da prática de ensino, em face das especificidades da instituição; pouco foi mencionado sobre organizar e valorizar grupos internos com este objetivo, o que permite supor que não estejam contando com pesquisadores especializados ou considerando suficientemente a literatura e experiências deste escopo. Ao final, apontamos que novos estudos poderiam aprofundar o conhecimento sobre os impasses e seus condicionantes, assim, auxiliar no desenvolvimento de alternativas, inovações organizacionais e programáticas para melhorar os processos de ensinar e aprender na educação superior brasileira.

Palavras-chave: palestras; seminários; oficinas; teleformação.

Estrategias de desarrollo profesional docente en universidades públicas: similitudes y diferencias

RESUMEN. En este estudio buscamos comprender el proceso de definición de las principales estrategias desarrolladas por los movimientos de formación pedagógica en cinco universidades públicas de Brasil. En concreto, pretendemos saber cómo ocurre la articulación de la pedagogía universitaria con las diferentes áreas del conocimiento, describir las estrategias desarrolladas y percibir las condiciones que facilitan y / o

dificultan su emprendimiento. La investigación contó con la colaboración de siete gestores que participaban en la organización y planificación de esas estrategias. Los resultados revelaron que: las principales estrategias utilizadas son conferencias, seminarios y talleres; sólo una de las instituciones utiliza actividades mediadas por tecnologías, como la teleformación; las universidades evidenciaron dificultades para constituir y fortalecer grupos que congreguen docentes y técnicos para el enfrentamiento de cuestiones de la práctica de enseñanza, en vista de las especificidades de la institución; poco se mencionó sobre organizar y valorar grupos internos con este objetivo, lo que permite suponer que no estén contando con investigadores especializados o considerando suficientemente la literatura y las experiencias de este ámbito. Al final, apuntamos que nuevos estudios podrían profundizar el conocimiento sobre los impasses y sus condicionantes, así, auxiliar en el desarrollo de alternativas, innovaciones organizacionales y programáticas para mejorar los procesos de enseñanza y aprender en la educación superior brasileña.

Palabras-clave: conferencias; seminarios; talleres; teleformaciones.

Introduction

Discussions about faculty education have evolved in recent years in order to overcome the dichotomy between initial and continuing training. Studies such as those by Marcelo (2009) deepen the concept of 'professional development', providing interesting subsidies for research and proposals for faculty training. In this sense, initial training, continuing training and training developed at or outside the workplace are part of a process that cannot be fragmented.

Professors who work at the higher level must also assume the incompleteness of their pedagogical training, their training for teaching, contrary to what is stated in Article 66 of the Law on Guidelines and Bases of National Education, so criticized in many studies to mention only the graduate programs for the faculty professional development, "[...] as a priority in master's and doctoral programs" (Law 9394, 1996). In this case, university pedagogy emerges as "[...] a space of knowledge oriented towards understanding the formation processes that take place in the university" (Lucarelli, 2012, p. 141).

On the other hand, it is important to consider that the National Plan for Education (PNE) (Law 13005, 2014), by reinforcing in Goal 12 the commitment to continue expanding access to this level of education, also implies Strategy 5, "[...] to expand inclusion and student assistance policies aimed at students of public institutions [...]" in order to "reduce ethnic-racial inequalities and increase access and permanence in higher education [...]" (Law 13005, 2014). The Plan reaffirms the commitment launched in the last decade through national policies, such as the Program for Support to Plans for the Restructuring and Expansion of Federal Universities - REUNI and the University Expansion Program, in addition to the expansion of higher education, the democratization of access and the democratization of knowledge (Decree 6096, 2007).

With such public policies, teaching and learning processes in the university become more complex.

Professors are challenged to deal in their pedagogical practice with a more differentiated profile of students, including those who had not previously attained this level of education.

Faced with this reality, many universities have sought to broaden the space of discussions on teaching processes management, curricula and students learning, as well as on how new and experienced professors develop teaching skills. Coordinations, nuclei and programs aimed at faculty professional development, centered on pedagogical issues, have taken shape in many Federal Institutions of Higher Education (IFES) in recent years. In the context of this movement, institutional strategies are defined to favor professional development, such as lectures, courses and workshops.

Strategies are "[...] an adjustable process, subjected to certain rules that ensure a certain decision-making according to the moment and the situation" (Ruiz, 2007, p. 35). This concept leads us to reflect on the characteristics of the contexts in which the training actions are organized and systematized.

In the present study, we did not only seek to identify the strategies adopted in this movement of faculty professional development, but also the previous actions and conditions that led to its design. We intend to unveil the determinant questions that lead to prioritize the strategies most undertaken in the federal universities researched: to bring light to questions raised by the fact that some strategies already known are not usually put into practice. Therefore, we aimed to understand the process of defining the main strategies of pedagogical training proposals in five public universities in Brazil. Specifically, we sought to know about the articulation of the coordination offices, nuclei and programs with the different areas of knowledge, describe the strategies developed by the institutions and realize conditions that facilitate and/or hinder the development of different strategy models.

The study is divided into five parts. First, we present the current literature on the main strategies of faculty education. Next, we explain the methodological approaches used to address the five universities that were part of the study. The results are divided into two distinct and complementary focuses, in which, initially, we present the preliminary actions and conditions that would have contributed to the definition of the strategies and then the description of the strategies. Finally, the final considerations, with a synthesis in similarities and differences found in this study and a commentary that may interest researchers and the planning of organizational and programmatic innovations to improve the processes of teaching and learning in Brazilian higher education.

Faculty training strategies: possibilities and construction processes

The social, historical and cultural context in which a particular institution is situated is directly related to academic work, interfering with different university practices, including pedagogical practices (Nepomneschi, 2000). Therefore, knowing this context and trying to understand it is an inherent task in any process of faculty professional development. We must consider that cultural and social issues are constantly changing and alter according to many factors, not constituting immutable realities. Without this willingness to know the different realities, the proposals of formation in any university and in any program can be limited, since beyond what is known as general and common to the teaching practice, each institution imposes its own obstacles, challenges, possibilities and facilitating conditions.

Pimenta and Anastasiou (2010, p. 122) also state the “[...] knowledge of institutional reality [...]” as a condition for the development of university pedagogy. They suggest to proceed “[...] a diagnosis of the problems present in the reality in question, which will be considered as starting point of the collective discussion of the proposal to be put into action”. Therefore, any initiative that concerns the faculty professional development should have one of their central concerns in the knowledge of reality. Innovative teaching and learning strategies are not a guarantee of success in pedagogical practice. One reason may be ignorance of the reality of the institution and the context of its students.

However, knowing the institutional reality is a complex task for both professors and other professionals involved in it. As such, it will be difficult to do it well through brief dialogues and

observations, for reality is revealed in actions and tacit acts, which are not always explicit and understood immediately. Often it requires the agents who coordinate these movements and also the professors a time of observation of this institution and of its students. The monitoring of the daily life of the professors within the departments and programs has been valuable possibility to apprehend this reality, but it takes ‘time’.

Time is an important element to be considered in any training process, becoming an ally of the activities developed by the coordinating agents. The diagnosis of the problems and challenges of pedagogical practice takes time. As Pimenta and Anastasiou (2010, p. 110) write, “[...] a process of pedagogical preparation must set goals, stages, referrals, over a pre-established time, in relation to problems diagnosed and transformed into goals.

Hevia (2000) corroborates with this discussion, when presenting the different modalities in which the pedagogical advisor acts, but that can be generalized to the other agents who coordinate the pedagogical proposals. In Hevia's (2000) conception, the tendencies of university professor education are divided into two modalities called ‘explicit’ and ‘incidental’. Explicit modalities include ‘formal’ (formal programs) and ‘informal’ (courses, workshops) types. On the other hand, the incidental modalities refer to the types of training that are directed towards “[...] pedagogical support for department/programs and professors [...]” and “[...] promotion and development of innovations” (Hevia, 2000, p. 103).

What characterize informal types of training, such as programs and workshops, are ‘punctual demands’ and ‘short duration’ because they do not require systematization of the content to be addressed. They are specific problems and punctual challenges determined by the most diverse sectors of the university. For Hevia (2000, p. 104), these moments of formation deserve a special look on the part of the pedagogical advisor, considering that “[...] in many cases, they are a first step in the systematic formation that the formal programs offer and generally represent the possibility of consolidation of these”. The author reinforces this relationship between informal and formal types of training, signaling the possibility of a greater systematization and organization of the contents, which will be part of the training process and which are an alternative to broaden the theoretical framework. What characterizes formal programs is their ‘systematic and integral character’ as well as ‘long duration’, allowing the deepening of

theoretical conceptions in the face of the problems of specific contexts and their reinterpretation.

The formal programs are one of the types of university teacher training and thus one of the many dimensions of coordinating agents performance of the. Hevia (2000, p. 104) argues that the most individualized moments, implicit in the advice, deserve to be highlighted, and that “[...] the pedagogical support to the departments or programs has the primary purpose of contributing to the improvement of the educational process [...]”, which is the main objective of any training initiative.

Another important consideration is the time needed to find possibilities to turn incidental pedagogical support into explicit support, i.e. one that is systematized and occurs through programs or coordination units. Many innovative pedagogical practices are not problematized and socialized for lack of time for discussion. The manager can also look for professors who are developing these practices and give them notoriety, with possibility of reflection to the other colleagues. However, this requires investment of time and efforts.

Strategies can be individual or collective. As Ruiz (2007) states, the strategies are chosen by the pedagogical agents, technicians or others responsible for these programs together with the professors. Such choice depends on the situation and must be agreed with the professors.

Frequently, professors can look for nuclei or programs motivated by specific difficulties linked to a situation of their pedagogical practice. In these cases, individual strategies have a lot of relevance. From the studies of Ruiz (2007), we can explain some of these individual strategies that develop this sense, such as portfolio, case studies and teletraining.

The portfolio is defined as “[...] a collection of documents that convincingly argue that a person is competent or has progressed in his/her training as a professor” (Ruiz, 2007, p. 48). Through the compilation and organization of documents, such as planning, student evaluation and reflection of both parties involved in this process, the professor has the opportunity to analyze aspects of his/her practice that can lead to improvement of teaching and learning processes.

The case studies enable professors, together with the coordinating agents of these programs, to examine “[...] as much as possible, situating in time and space an aspect, a question, or some events” (Ruiz, 2007, p. 49). It is up to the professor to describe a situation, to understand the factors that hinder the success of the teaching and learning processes, and to change what is possible. In both strategies - portfolio and case study - the distance

required to understand and reflect on one's own practice is often performed with the help of an advisor or peer.

Another strategy with the participation of external agents refers to teletraining, which includes the possibility of individual counseling, through dialogues between the advisor and the professor through tools such as private electronic mail or virtual environment. It will be collective advice through chats or environments of collaborative activities in which advisors or coordinating agents and professors participate (Ruiz, 2007).

Providing individual training on specific aspects of a professor's pedagogical practice is an important concern of professional development movements, but not always enough to positively impact the general education of the student. Often, some problems that seem to be specific have, in fact, a relation to wider problems of a particular course or institution. Better alternatives require broader mobilization of the academic community.

This analysis joins the discussions of Lucarelli (2000), for whom the construction of the specific university didactics has an effect on the articulation of the pedagogical practice that occurs at the microspace (classroom) with the macro issues, i.e. the elements established in syllaby, professional development objectives, and also to other institutional guidelines. The author emphasizes that the institutional perspective, its history and its present have real determination in the university didactics.

Marcelo Garcia (1999, p. 139) asserts that the concept of professional development “[...] refers to the possibility of overcoming the individualistic and cellular conception of habitual practices of permanent formation”. Thus, it is important to change the dynamics of the work, because the professional development, besides not being predictable, depending on the trajectory of each professor, is also dependent on the choices and the relations with the peers that the professor establishes during this process.

Ruiz (2007, p. 64) reinforces this perspective by explaining that “[...] the constitution of work teams is essential to reach the institutional, to combat isolated work”. Thus, the importance of the institutional dimension in any counseling to faculty. The consideration of the other's view on the institutional aspects and on the training contents that constitute an area of knowledge generate the collective work process, surpassing isolated work. Currently, many studies point to collective work as being more likely to make pedagogical advances and contribute to learning through curricular integration.

In order to rethink the changes in the curricula of the programs and in the pedagogical practice to reach the formation of the students, there is, as an alternative, the existence of spaces of discussion and reflection that put in focus the questions related to teaching. As already mentioned, the formative dialogue does not occur in pauses of bureaucratic meetings, nor in corridors or class intervals. Rather, it demands time, availability of stakeholders and appropriate place. In this context, the coordination of work groups gains relevant connotation. Teaching teams should collectively discuss clearly defined goals about the egress profile they intend to form and about the main objectives of the course, so that the professors move around a project that is collective construct and thus define the role of each one, not only in its elaboration, but in its development.

This knowledge, when they become institutional proposals, are real challenges for the professor who in his/her history has developed works individually, separately. Often a professor as such opposes the idea of his/her commitment to the students' training process, because they usually limit his/her work to the classroom and have the idea that it is sufficient for each one to perform his/her activity well. However, we know that the commitment to the students' training project is not only in its execution in the classroom, in an isolated work perspective. Its execution and evaluation have a much more complex scope. Teamwork presupposes shifting from class or group professor to institution professor (Zabalza, 2004). It can be seen that the faculty professional development is not built around the group he/she attends or the subject he/she teaches, but around the formative project of which he/she is a part.

The arguments, therefore, are to combine individual and collective strategies in professor training processes. Examples of collective strategies include action-research and the practice analysis workshop. Action-research can be developed individually, or with a mixed group of professors. The activities that comprise this strategy are part of a cyclical process in which needs are identified first, then the group will choose and plan the best alternatives based on these difficulties. Subsequently, the evaluation that can identify new needs is performed (Ruiz, 2007).

The workshops for the analysis of the practice bring the possibility of mutual observation. In this case, observation is the starting point for questioning and analyzing practice. The participation of students in these strategies is also an interesting condition. Ruiz (2007, p. 51) points out that professors have

the possibility of being evaluated by students "[...] through a questionnaire in which they recognize those aspects about what they consider important to work with". From the analysis of these questionnaires, professors reflect on the alternatives to their practice, together with other colleagues. According to Ruiz (2007), it is essential for professors of a given program or department to collaborate between groups. This strategy is an example of a peer-led training process.

Methodological pathways

Making efforts in a qualitative research allowed us to define strategies and procedures that took into account the experiences from the informants point of view, trying to understand the sense, meaning and feelings that such experiences provoked and provoke for the subjects of the research. Bogdan and Biklen (1994, p. 48) explain that qualitative researchers "[...] try to analyze the data in all its wealth, respecting as much as possible the way in which they were recorded or transcribed". The main challenge was to conduct research in five universities without disregarding that the institutions have specific realities and that even the newly established universities already have a history, a culture of their own, and an identity under construction.

From this perspective, we chose to develop this research through the multiple case study strategy. Yin (2010) clarifies that case studies represent the strategy chosen primarily when 'how' and 'why' questions are posed. For the author, "[...] the case study is not a tactic for data collection nor merely a feature of planning itself, but a comprehensive research strategy" (Yin, 2010, p.33). Among the advantages of multiple case studies, in relation to a single case study, one can cite the possibility of reinforcing the findings or detecting contrasting differences between the cases and their variables. This process is called replication, which can be either literal or theoretical. According to Yin (2010, p. 78), "[...] each case must be carefully selected so that (a) it can predict similar results (a literal replication), or (b) produce contrasting results, but for predictable reasons (a theoretical replication)". The latter assist in complementing the theoretical structure, becoming "[...] the vehicle for the generalization of new cases".

The research was conducted in five public universities in Brazil, each treated as a case. Four of these institutions are older. The fifth was implemented in the context of the policies of

expansion of higher education between 2006 and 2008 and is located in a region of lower economic and educational development. Of the four consolidated universities, one is in the state capital and the other three in interior cities. In order to preserve the identity of the managers who contributed to the research, the names of the institution and the programs, nuclei or coordination offices have been preserved and are presented in Figure 1, as we will refer to in the text.

After a first mapping of the documents available in the electronic portals of the universities, we located the managers responsible for the institutional programs of professor training, and invited them to contribute to the research through an interview. Seven (7) interviews were conducted among managers, professors, pedagogues and technicians responsible for organizing and planning proposals for faculty professional development. This instrument made it possible for the research participants to explain the strategy definition process, according to Research Project 22225, approved by the UFRGS Ethics Committee. Figure 1 shows the proposals identified in each university.

From the data obtained, it was possible to define categories and subcategories. First, the academic units/program relationship, which takes place at higher administration meetings and their visits to the academic units. The 'strategies' category has the subcategories 'workshops, lectures/seminars' and 'teletraining', which will be developed below.

Universities ^a	Professional Development Proposals ^a	Managers interviewed ^a
U1 ^a	Program-1 ^a	Ea ^a
U2 ^a	Program-2 ^a	Ea ^a
U3 ^a	Nucleus-3 ^a	Ea ^a
U4 ^a	Program-4 ^a	Ea ^a -Eb ^a
U5 ^a	Coordination-5 ^a	Ea ^a -Eb ^a

Figure 1. Mapping of Universities.

Source: Prepared by the authors (May 2017).

The process of defining strategies: understanding contexts and scenarios

Ruiz (2007) defines the pedagogical advisory 'strategy' as an adjustable process that is subject to certain rules, considering contexts, situations and moments experienced by those involved in this process: coordinating agents, advisors and professors. Thus, as important as looking at strategies is looking at the context, actions and conditions that contribute to their definition, justifying decisions by certain models over others.

One of these preliminary actions refers to the articulation between the university professional development proposals and academic units and

programs, where faculty are assigned, as a means to come closer to these institutional instances and to forward commitment to their further education. As recent studies have shown, this articulation is especially important for approaching other areas of knowledge in order to establish dialogues, listen to demands, an important condition that facilitates the development of specific didactics (Lucarelli, 2000, 2012).

In considering the contexts and situations, we observed similarities among universities, in the preliminary actions that interfere with the definition of the strategies and, in this sense, the managers were invited to explain about the relationship with the units/programs. From this category, it was possible to detect in their speeches that higher administration meetings are privileged locus to observe demands and raise awareness on questions about teaching in relation to course issues.

The articulations with the organizational base are also established through the program coordinators, as well as directly with the academic units. The manager of U3 reports that "[...] in our case here, it is via program coordinator, via program board, basically. They are relationships with academic units, colleges and programs" (U3-Ea). In the same sense, a U4 collaborator explains,

[...] so once a month our [University] graduation committee, as is already established in our bylaws, [...] once a month we have meetings with all the program coordinators, both face-to-face and at distance. At this meeting, we dealt with various issues (U4-a).

Still in U4, during these meetings there are discussions about questions brought by the coordinators of programs to which the manager seeks to provide guidelines, and among them the pedagogical issues are addressed: "[...] we also open a moment for stories, so that they speak of their anguish and also so that we will know what is happening in the program coordinations" [U4-Ea].

U5, a multicampus university, explains that coordination actions also occur from nuclei present on each campus. As these nuclei have the attribution of performing these activities on the campus, the manager says that

[...] there is a cabinet work very close to the academic coordinators; we have monthly meetings with the academic coordinators and I always tell them that they are the [Pro-Rector's Office] on campus and that, consequently, the nucleus is part of the academic coordination. [So], we have the presence of [general academic coordination] also on campus (U5-Ea).

We emphasize, in the case of this university, the importance of interlocution with the academic coordinators, who are the managers-professors responsible for the nuclei in the campuses. Considering that the professors responsible for the nuclei come from different areas, it is important to highlight how favorable for the construction of the training strategies can be the relation of this Pro-Rector's office with these professionals.

At U2, the manager interviewed, who had the intention of revitalizing Program 2, stated that the moment was to raise awareness among the units. The Undergraduate Pro-Rector's office and an education team at the university were working on the task: "We talked to the leaders of the unit, marking these meetings with coordinators and department heads to invite, because it is an invitation [...] to elaborate the project" (U2-Ea).

We realize that most of the pro-rectors of the respondent universities take advantage of the moment of meeting that congregates higher spheres and managers of the units, colleges, programs and departments, to provide orientations about the university teaching. The managers report these moments as an attempt to sensitize the other leaders to these activities, recognizing them as allies of this process (Feixas, 2004). Although these meetings have other issues on the agenda, and the relations are not direct with the programs, nuclei or coordinators, we realize that they can be privileged moments to observe and listen to the concerns of the professors and, therefore, to include them in the strategies of the movements of faculty professional development.

A reading of university hierarchical arrangements by Zabalza (2004, p. 94) shows that "[...] in universities, especially in large universities, the higher hierarchical structures are far from inferior spheres; [...] it is practically unfeasible to transfer the decisions taken as an institution to all its members".

This structure corresponds to that found in Brazilian universities. In this sense, it is what Zabalza (2004) says about the possibility of the 'intermediary leaders' acting to make decisions not come abruptly in hierarchically inferior instances, since "[...] the role of those who lead the intermediate instances (colleges, departments, institutes, research groups) is fundamental in achieving this institutional integration" (Zabalza, 2004, p. 94). The possibility used by U2, U3, U4 and U5 managers resides in meetings of the higher spheres.

Another dimension that emanated from the respondents' speeches in an attempt to articulate with units, programs and departments refers to visits

to the units that are held to listen to the demands, in the search for the alignment of professors' concerns with the actions/strategies of the proposals. When confronted with the different realities, located in a certain time and space, the pedagogical knowledge reconfigures itself. According to Pimenta and Anastasiou (2010, p. 83), "[...] the authentic return to Pedagogy will occur if the educational sciences cease from starting from established knowledge and begin to take the practice of those formed as a starting (and arrival) point".

As the U4 respondent says,

[...] we went to the units, we met with the professors and we did a survey [...] of what had already happened to the program. It complements the technique that we try to do something like this, that reaches different units, the different areas of knowledge [U4-Eb].

In the same perspective, another manager collaborates:

[...] we begin to hold meetings with the academic units to feel their demands. So, we feel, for example, [...] that professors incoming between 2010 and 2014 feel the lack of new methodologies, someone who shows how to do a lesson, an assessment [U4-Ea].

The universities that most recently have out-of-headquarters units are still articulating their initiatives: "We are going to do [Program 4] here and on campuses" [U4-Ea]. The manager explains that the training was not carried out because they are still waiting for hiring the technical staff that will facilitate this communication. They want the activities of Program 4 to be carried out "[...] and in each campus we will have a pedagogue precisely to work here together with the Pro-Rector's Office of Student Affairs, to do the academic accompaniment and also to work with people [in] faculty training as well" [U4-Ea].

This type of challenge has already been faced by U5, which was born as multicampus. It refers to setting up a faculty professional development policy, considering the specificities of the different areas of knowledge that characterize the institutional context of each campus. In this sense, the programs for faculty professional development are considered as nuclei, as one of the interviewees acknowledges: "[...] the gap is evident [...] it is clear that people will never account for the local demand of each one of the campuses. I speak of everyday life, of what each campus is needing to discuss at this time in these programs" (U5-Ea).

As Lucarelli (2012) points out, the advisors and also the coordinating agents constitute their

professional capacity as they establish relationships higher administration meetings with the different areas, building specific didactics. In addition to the on-site visits, U5, because it has the decentralized characteristic, was concerned with implanting the nuclei on the campuses where the challenges of building these spaces are revealed so that, as already mentioned by Cunha et al. (2010), are constituted as places of professional development of these professors: "We have tried through the coordination office this construction of a partnership network with the nuclei, it is the reconfiguration of the nucleus that impacts on the coordination, [...] and do not send the support policy for them to execute" (U5-Eb).

In this same dimension, visiting the units, another aspect addressed in the interviews referred to the universities that have recently expanded to other municipalities. In all, it was pointed out the complexity of operating the proposals outside the headquarters.

Strategies

As for the strategies adopted by the faculty professional development movements, in the institutions that were part of the study, we noticed that there are similarities. Strategies that require the systematic performance of external professionals, such as 'study cycles' and 'case studies' (Ruiz, 2007), were not reported by the interviewees. It was pointed out that technicians and pedagogues who could perform these functions do not have the grounding or legitimacy before the professors to perform the advisory tasks. As for experienced professors, for reasons of time and commitment to other activities, the figure of academic mentor was also seldom cited as a possibility.

On the other hand, we noticed the participation of experienced professors in the proposals for faculty professional development in four of the universities, as lectures, seminars and workshops. In this sense, the proposals count on the collaboration of professors of the university or external professors. They are invited by experience recognized in higher education, whether linked to Education or other areas of knowledge. They bring with them the legitimacy to speak to their university professors because they are more closely related to the pedagogical practice of a particular area of knowledge, to pedagogy or to specific didactics. These are the functions that we find closest to the academic mentor, which should occur as a continuity, but, therefore, are limited to the moment of lectures and workshops.

U1 tried to invest recently in the commitment of the programs/departments, through a professor who would accompany the project developed by the beginning professors, from the activities of a module of Program 1. This proposal was carried out in a given year and revised, considering the difficulty of experienced professors. It aimed at greater integration between new entrants and the other professors of the departments: "If I had the idea that he set up a project and that it would be oriented. But [...] who is going to guide this professor?" (U1-Ea). In spite of the possibilities of this professional, "[...] acting as a model and presenting his skills in classroom" (Ruiz, 2007, p. 42) and thus helping the development of the novice professor, few experienced professionals were willing to this activity. It was open to investigate the conditions under which this proposal was tried, as well as the reasons for the low adherence.

Therefore, the proposals for faculty professional development take place in the universities studied basically from strategies such as workshops or lectures/seminars and only in U1, 'teletraining' is used.

In this University, through the workshops that usually occur, the academic units were invited to present their proposals for the teaching of specific areas. In the words of the manager,

[...] this module has turned into a collection of workshops [...] it calls all units to see what they have to offer and everything else they can do [...] according to their subjects... [But] it's not a program that happens before he [the professor] comes in ... He went to university, he's already teaching and he's doing (U1-Ea).

Through the Moodle Platform, the activities of the professors who supervised the workshops of the module are monitored. Therefore, U1 was the only one that reported using the advisory strategy, classified by Ruiz (2007) as teletraining

As workshops of U1 rely on the presence of the professor focused on small groups of professors, "[...] who are willing to design learning and interaction environments [...]", these strategies become viable and gain form in this university (Ruiz, 2007, p. 55). In U5, for example, one of the projects brings as a possibility activities that are posted on the Moodle platform and are in charge of the nuclei technicians. However, such a strategy was not reported in the respondents' speeches nor does it include written records of possible implementation attempts. This is a technique that requires the presence of an advisor and, perhaps because of this, detected only in U1 in which the professors assume this role (Ruiz, 2007).

It is worth mentioning, according to studies by Hevia (2000, p. 114), that the workshops are based on specific demands, which characterize them as “[...] explicit modality” strategies. The workshops do not have the same character as the workshops for the analysis of the practice, presented in the study of Ruiz (2007), because they do not occur in the teaching and learning processes where professors are evaluated by their students and from peer observation. In the case of two of the universities studied, the workshops are working groups focused on a specific subject. In the case of U1, the professors, after these discussions, elaborate a Work Plan to be developed in class. However, as the interviewees reveal, at the time of class, the professor develops the functions separately.

A U4 interviewee reports that professors “[...] engage more in workshop activities, where groups are smaller or have themes closer to practice. We had a workshop on classroom management” (U4-Eb).

The workshops are also used at U5, with an invited external professor to develop a course of pedagogical training for the institutional program of faculty professional development. The activities developed in the campuses and also served for the training of technicians and pedagogues of the nuclei themselves. As reported,

[...] this course focused on the teaching plan, [...] then, they perceive this methodological, even objective, didactic thing. They realize that it is a field to be known, that it is a field to be studied. [They understand] what is behind them and then they really want this training that is deeper (U5-Eb).

The seminars that congregated the professors of all the campuses were temporarily suspended in U5 with the idea of replacing them with seminars gathering programs of related areas. It is important to point out that these collective seminars were not permanently suspended, because they are foreseen in the projects that originated the coordination itself.

The current investment of the management of U5 is in the creation of strategies that relate more directly to the teaching practice, and the collective seminars can be resumed later. The manager explains that “[...] because of this, last year, we decided not to do the seminar, but we are offering a pedagogical training course on campuses” (U5-Ea). Another respondent reiterates that, considering the multicampus organization of this university, “[...] it will invest in decentralization, in poles, and try to make it more scientific, in the form of production” (U5-Eb).

U3 invests in seminars/lectures. Collective moments through a lecture were reported as a productive strategy by the Pro-Rector of U3. In the manager’s view, the talk made possible contact with professors from institutions outside Brazil: “Her lecture was very good [...] to our team, from here, to professors and to graduate students. It was about University Pedagogy. I’ve been trying to establish some form of permanent contact” (U3-Ea).

The U4 Program also conducts many training activities through lectures. As the interlocutor brings it, it may be “[...] a specific lecture that the professor even suggests and we help bring that person. So we also make these partnerships” (U4-Eb). At U5, the challenge is to get the nuclei to propose strategies that are relevant to campuses.

We verified that the five universities that were part of the study have or have recently had professors in the area of education or professors who demonstrate success in the development of classes in specific areas as collaborators of proposals for faculty professional development in the process of planning and execution of strategies. According to Vieira (2013, p. 150), “[...] the role of professors in the area of Education may be especially important because they hold specialized educational knowledge and can assume pedagogical advisory functions”. These professionals give workshops and lectures at U1, U3, U4 and U5. In U1, the technicians count on the collaboration of the professors of the area of Education to minister the workshops of the ‘pedagogical module’ of the Program.

Also at U3, the manager states that “[...] the [Education area] has contributed a lot in this management [...]” and informs that a professor will even present an action project for the university to think about the area of University Pedagogy. External professors have developed lectures.

As another interviewee states: “In general, we count on the participation of other people, from the institution itself or from other institutions to account for the activities, and to help us in this” (U4-Eb). U5 also encourages internal and external professors to report on program activities and at U2, although the activities at the time of the interview were in the process of planning, in the planning itself the professors of the education area contributed to the proposal.

Similarities, differences and final considerations

At the end of this study, it is opportune to retake the considerations of Yin (2010) on multiple case studies in an attempt to reflect on what was possible to apprehend in the analyses made and on literal and theoretical replications.

The strategies used by the universities studied for the faculty professional development show certain similarities between the cases studied and, interestingly, some divergences in relation to the studies of Ruiz (2007), which dealt with the characterization of the strategies used in the professional development process. Differently from what the author points out, the pedagogical training workshops do not involve the processes that occur during the pedagogical practice, nor the peers and the students, in order to create study groups in the process of implementing new practices. In the cases of U1, U4 and U5, the workshops relate to the area of knowledge of professors and gain a punctual character, formally organized, as argued by Hevia (2000).

We realized that in University 3, the process of relation with units was restricted to their relationship with the higher spheres, of the rectory with the directors of faculties/units. At no time were there any visits or more direct contact with professors in the academic units. As a consequence, in this university the strategies are more sparse and are only concentrated in some seminars.

The closer the relationship with professors in specific areas, more demands emerge and the demands are met, and the workshops will be an alternative for smaller groups with specific themes. Nevertheless, the workshops need to be monitored and systematically intervened in the resignifications 'from' and 'to' pedagogical practice.

One of the literal replications is that it becomes easier to operate restricted and short events, such as lectures or workshops. Longer term monitoring requires professionals prepared and willing to do so.

The contrasting differences between the cases studied were observed in U1. Contrary to the others, the relationship with faculties and departments is more consolidated. Little is said about the relationship with the higher spheres as a determinant for the definition of strategies. Professors from the different areas of knowledge jointly assume the training processes, guiding new professors in the processes of teletraining, strategy mentioned only in this institution, in addition to seminars/lectures and workshops.

We point out that one of the justifications coincides with a study by Cunha (2014), demonstrating the recurrent amateurism characteristic of institutional actions aiming at faculty continuing education in universities. Thus, "initiatives [...] based on theoretical reflections on the meaning of training, its conditions related to an adult who learns in the context of work" (Cunha, 2014, p. 38) are still incipient.

The interviewees responsible for the organization of these activities mentioned that the discussions about the possibilities of action in the different areas are gains inherent to this dynamic. Such understanding is important for the development of specific didactics, as reported by Lucarelli (2007). However, in general, this relation ceases in the development of the strategies, since no subsequent monitoring action of these activities was reported. Universities demonstrate difficulties in strengthening internal counseling groups focusing on practice issues with the particularities of each university, each center, unit or campus, a literal replication that deserves to be deepened for the professional development of university teachers.

The interviewees did not mention about organizing and valuing internal groups with this goal, which allows them to assume that they are not counting on specialized researchers or considering sufficiently the literature and experiences of this scope. In this sense, it should be noted that, without the construction of these moments of study, it is possible that existing strategies are not reconfigured, as well as the development of new models derived from the incidental strategies that comprise the specific demands of the courses, as Hevia (2000) suggests. In addition, reflections that allow the articulation of theoretical knowledge with the vicissitudes of the practice, besides favoring the faculty professional development also contribute to the development of the area of university pedagogy.

At last, we pointed out that new studies carried out in research groups in the Education area and in specific lines of graduate programs could deepen knowledge about the deadlocks and constraints of these movements and thus help in the development of alternatives, organizational and programmatic innovations to improve the processes of teaching and learning in Brazilian higher education. This is, of course, an issue that is still lacking in studies and is aggravated by the new policies and demands of the democratization of education.

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