

# REFERENCES AND CRITERIA FOR THE TEACHING ACTION

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## ABSTRACT

*The study presented in this article aimed to construct categorical parameters which could guide and ground initial or continuing teacher education. It also supports the monitoring and assessment of teaching from a training perspective. The study was supported by contributions of coordinators, teacher educators as well as experienced teachers working at various levels and areas. The guiding idea of the research was to deal with the proposed issues from the reality of work in schools to the construction of references about teaching, observed in its various aspects, in order to conceptualize the basic elements which distinguish it as a qualified professional activity.*

TEACHER EDUCATION • TEACHER STANDARDS •  
PROFESSIONALIZATION OF TEACHING

**T**HE PROSPECT OF AN INCREASING PROFESSIONALIZATION OF TEACHERS INCLUDES the recognition that certain types of knowledge are fundamental for teaching in formal education institutions. Accordingly, different knowledge of theoretical and practical order could, or should, be mobilized in different situations involving the teaching action, which demands from teachers not only reflection and adaption to their work context, but also autonomy.

In general, this seems to be one of the characteristics strongly present in several countries which proposed – within their respective educational policies – what is commonly called *teaching standards* focused on the guidance, delimitation and evaluation of the education and performance of teachers (NOVAES, 2013). In addition to certain uses of the so-called *teaching standards* – some particularly controversial in countries such as Chile, the United States, the United Kingdom, among others –, the processes involved in their stipulation and discussion seem to encompass a wide formative potential. Even more so when one aims for initial and in-service specialized education able to inform the professional and public character of the teaching action.

This article is a development of the work done by researchers of Fundação Carlos Chagas who, since 2012, have examined the relation between teacher evaluation and professional development and the appreciation of the work of teachers. In the face of the tensions and alternative perspectives associated with this theme, these studies have

The study presented in this article summarizes the results of research published in *Textos FCC: Relatórios Técnicos*, n. 44, 2015.

sought to understand in greater detail where and how the so-called teaching standards are constructed, their purposes and some possible effects of these policies.

Therefore, this study's main objective was to research and construct category parameters – which here we call *referentes de ação docente* [references of the teaching action]<sup>1</sup> – capable of guiding and grounding initial or continuing teacher education, as well as supporting and qualifying the monitoring of teaching – from an eminently formative perspective –, aimed at consolidating teaching professionalization. The starting point was the universe of the teaching work done in school education. Support for that came from the contribution of experienced teachers working at various levels and educational areas, educational coordinators, teacher educators, and educational specialists by means of *operational discussion groups*, as well as from the relevant theoretical framework which supports the assumptions used herein.

Importantly, the objectives and the assumptions of this research differ from the general sense which usually guides many of the policies abroad, strongly aimed at institutionalizing models of external teacher evaluation amid different designs and methodologies for measuring, among other intentions and goals. Indeed, although one can find many points in common in the definition of what can be encompassed in teacher education and the teaching action in general, the teacher assessments promoted by various countries differ considerably in terms of objectives, purposes, evaluation procedures, and types of effects or consequences on their education professionals and the school units where they work (TORRECILLA, 2006).

Thus, the object or purpose of this research was not to address the theme of teacher evaluation – among its various theoretical frameworks and methodologies of measurement of teacher performance –, but, rather, to highlight the formative aspect comprised in what is characteristic of the teaching action in the school environment and of the different types of knowledge that inform, guide and occasionally determine the quality of this action.

The national context of the offer of undergraduate courses in higher education institutions – marked, according to Gatti and Barretto (2009, p. 252), by the absence of a “clear professional profile of the teacher” – indicates the relevance of investigating and delimiting more objectively what knowledge on the teaching action could fill this gap or at least stimulate debate on the teaching action in a more assertive and delimited way, in an effort “to build a body of basic knowledge which allows taking discussions on this topic to a level beyond that of opinions” (GATTI, 2013, p. 1).

The text is organized into three parts, and the introduction. First, we discuss some theoretical assumptions that underpin the

1 The choice of the term *referentes de ação docente* [references of the teaching action] is aimed at distancing our proposal from certain interpretations that could be associated with the Portuguese term *padrões* [standards], as a model or example to be followed. Not infrequently, *standards* are guided and stipulated amid external evaluation processes, which is quite different from addressing what would characterize the teaching action within research and taking into account the specificities of the educational context in Brazil. Accordingly, what we propose and call *referentes of the teaching action* are criteria by which we can understand and evaluate, from an eminently formative perspective, different types of activities that compose and inform the work of teachers; they are not tools by means of which one can determine how teaching activities should be executed and founded.

research, with special emphasis on the characterization of teaching as a distinctive element of the professional teaching action; then we present the methodology of the operational discussion groups and a summary of the methodological details of the stages of field research and validation of references. Finally, we describe the framework of the *references of the teaching action* stipulated.

## THE TEACHER AS AN INSTITUTIONAL TEACHING AGENT

Amid the growing recognition and appreciation of the professional nature of the teaching work, some questions emerge: what characterizes and distinguishes the teacher's action? How do the recognition and appreciation of the teaching work affect research on the types of knowledge and practical skills which constitute and inform teachers' professional practice?

Such questions, in themselves provocative, denote the complexity and specificity of the teaching action. The different functions or utility which can be attributed to school – and, consequently, to the work done by teachers – should not obscure or underestimate what characterizes a *school culture* (AZANHA, 1995). Regardless of what it leads to in public life or in the private sphere of individuals, school education has something specific and characteristic which informs the formative sense of its pedagogical practices.

It is evident that the possible “impact” or “effect” of school education can be analyzed and valued from many points of view, since the work of schools and teachers is undeniably a matter of public interest. However, this perspective allows understanding the school only by its *extrinsic ends* (PETERS, 1979), which are different from the objectives inherent to an education considered in its *intrinsic ends*. The various angles from which one can describe and analyze education – and, consequently, teacher performance – reach the limits determined by the object itself – in this case, the school institution and the type of work done in it under specific conditions. As noted by Peters (1979, p. 103):

[...] What would be objectionable would be to suppose that certain characteristics could be regarded as essential irrespective of context and of the questions under discussion. In the context of the planning of resources it may be unobjectionable to think of education as something in which a community can invest; in the context of a theory of social cohesion, education may be harmlessly described as a socializing process. But, if one is considering it from the point of view of the teacher's task in the class-room, these descriptions are both too general and too embedded in a dangerous dimension,

for they encourage a conformist or instrumental way of looking at education.<sup>2</sup>

Certainly, there is something specific in the kind of work that schools and teachers do, or should do. Perhaps the first element to consider from this point of view is the fact that education, in a broad sense, is not the exclusive domain of teachers or schools. Educational practices constitute and accompany human existence, regardless of career choices or any other individual and collective ways of life. Since birth, the inclusion of children and young people in the human world, under certain cultural and historical aspects, is done by means of educational processes which range from the learning of one's mother tongue and the first forms of behavior and conduct within one's family to living together in the social environment and sharing knowledge, symbols, values, and conventions.

This observation does not mean to diminish or relativize the importance of the teaching work. On the contrary, it indicates the demand for research and for the clarification of what is characteristic of this profession. Unlike the daily activities of teaching and learning as forms that constitute socialization, teaching as a professional activity takes place in an institutional context. Carvalho (1996, p. 18) argues appropriately that teachers are “intellectual agents of a culture and a knowledge that constitute and are constituted by educational institutions”, composing thus a “differentiated social group”, marked by the concern with teaching as the main professional activity and not as something contingent or circumstantial. The teacher in a school institution – beyond the role and characteristics that can be attributed to him as a “historical, sociological or psychological *type*” –, is “a pedagogical *figure* that inhabits the school” in the words of Masschelein and Simons (2013, p. 131).<sup>3</sup>

Stating that teaching is a professional activity characteristic of teachers leads to the need to reflect on some widespread notions in the education field. Not infrequently, we find discourses and conceptions that see in the teacher's figure only someone whose task is “to facilitate learning” or play the role of a “more experienced partner” of his or her students. We agree with J. Passmore (1984, p. 38) when he states that such conceptions underestimate the teacher's task, or – which seems to be more serious – may express a kind of “de-schooling of the school” (MASSCHELEIN; SIMONS, 2013, p. 9). After all, nothing allows us to say that the lives of children and young people are not filled with more experienced partners, beginning with their parents, or that they cannot be in full contact with a variety of elements capable of facilitating learning, besides the school environment.

<sup>2</sup> Translator's note: Excerpt in English has been extracted from PETERS, Richard Stanley. *Authority, Responsibility and Education*. New York: Routledge, 2015 [1959], p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> Translator's note: Excerpts in English have been extracted from MASSCHELEIN, Jan; SIMONS, Maarten. *In defense of the school. A public issue*. Leuvin: TStorme, 2013 [2012].

In these terms, pedagogical teacher education – both that of a general nature and that linked to the specificities of different school disciplines – imposes reflection on the constituent elements of the act of teaching. Even more so when this activity is linked to simplistic views such as that which reduces teaching to the equivalent of an inefficient and “authoritarian” verbalization of a teacher. Identifying and problematizing possible questionable teaching practices should not mean condemning these activities, which notably characterize the work of school institutions and through which we can glimpse various responsibilities and actions of the teacher in everyday school life. Beyond the discursive forms employed by the teacher to relate to students – and their effectiveness or intrinsic value –, the search for a broader conception of teaching that is more concerned with the various conditions in which it is practiced is of utmost relevance.

It might be interesting to distinguish firstly two fundamental types of use of the verb teach. Depending on the context, teaching can indicate both an implicitly successful execution of this action or the term can mean an attempt which, albeit guided by a goal to achieve, is not necessarily concretized (SCHEFFLER, 1974). This significant distinction is to verify, for example, that “students have learned all they were expected to learn in the school year” or, conversely, to see that the work of a teacher – even if duly qualified – does not automatically imply that his students have learned all that was sought. According to John Passmore (1984, p. 28):

Some confusion may probably arise from the fact that all of us, on some occasion, use the word “teach” in such a way that any attempt to cause someone to learn means to teach and, in other occasions, only when one succeeds in making someone learn can we legitimately use the word “teaching”.

The linear and causal view that a teaching action necessarily produces learning – easily deducible from the fairly common expression *teaching-learning process* – seems not to properly apply in all cases and indiscriminately. Anyway, neither teaching taken as an activity that leads to success nor teaching considered as an attempt to achieve a particular goal specify the types of action they refer to or the way they are conducted.

In a school, it is expected that most of the activities performed by its institutional agents are identified as teaching, whereas similar activities carried out outside the school may acquire another connotation. About a classroom where students sit randomly, speak at the same time and are involved in different activities, it can be hypothesized that this is a chaotic organization or a typical demonstration of student indiscipline.

However, the teacher of this class may have proposed work composed of both individual and group activities which require the mobilization of students, and thus a certain agitation is necessary and productive. Therefore, this activity may have been sufficiently compelling to bring about more enthusiastic and noisy student participation.

Indeed, activities such as presenting, demonstrating, storytelling, gesturing, asking and answering questions, formulating action plans, and even remaining silent could be considered mere entertainment, fun, or else teaching activities, depending on the context in which they are performed. In this sense, what seems to define whether or not an activity is teaching are its *objectives*, whose *purposes* are to *produce learning intentionally* (HIRST, 1973), according to the context in which it occurs, such as the one that involves school education.

Characterized by its objectives and the context in which it is practiced, teaching may be presented, as we have seen, in different ways, which requires verifying and thinking about the different times employed in the act of teaching, whose particularities are worth analyzing. There are relatively short periods of teaching – of fifty minutes, for example, a quite common pattern of time of an hour-class in many public school systems in the country – or longer periods, such as three weeks to three years. The objectives or goals of a teaching activity may lie “beyond the limits of the activity itself or one of its segments, or totally lack temporal conditions” (SCHEFFLER, 1974, p. 77). This seems to be the case when we admit teaching focused on the development of citizenship, that is, a goal that hopefully is present throughout one’s school career and that notably persists throughout the very exercise of citizenship, after one has completed schooling.

In a school, it is assumed that teaching is not random, such as informing the name of some street to someone who is lost and asking for directions; it is a professional activity performed in an institution with an eminently formative characteristic. In this sense, the purposes and objectives of teaching are determined by the context in which they are formulated, conveyed and revised. Anyway, there lies a specificity of school teaching, which requires specific formation and dispositions of the subject who aspires to be a teacher. In this regard, Passmore’s (1984, p. 41) analysis of the teaching profession is particularly interesting:

It is by no means certain that anyone can become a teacher – his ability to teach, knowledge, and patience may be too limited to make this option possible – or that anyone can teach dyslexic children to read, or teach quantum physics or advanced mathematics. Precisely for this reason, today we have a class of professional teachers, subject to a special preparation, or people



whom we encourage to acquire a special degree of knowledge in specific areas.

In the face of specialized professional education, could we ask about the kinds of teaching which would be most successful, differentiating them from those which would be doomed to “failure”? It is a relevant question, but it needs to be relativized. Questions like this can presuppose the existence of infallible teaching methods, regardless of who practices them, the educational context in which are applied, and what one intends to teach. In the daily life of classrooms, the employment, in combination or successively, of diversified teaching methods and the frequent and justified complaints of many teachers who attest that it is “easier said than done” seem to confirm a sort of methodological illusion of “savior” procedures or, at least, that the context of educational practice presents elements which intervene in the teaching action and which escape the more general character of theoretical and methodological approaches commonly present in the educational field. This should not be confused with the merit and the interest of such approaches as an object of research and content of initial and in-service teacher education.

In any case, the decision and, not infrequently, the enthusiasm for adopting a particular teaching methodology seem to encompass the idea that this activity can be guided by rules whose strict observation and compliance with guarantee “success” in their execution. This is the reason why teaching rules derived from some branch of science – such as psychology or neurology, for example – are so often disseminated under the allegation that their supposed efficacy is supported by scientific authority. But formulas aimed at achieving success can be more or less relevant and interesting depending on several factors (CARVALHO, 2001).

In this regard, Scheffler (1974) proposes an interesting distinction between *exhaustive* and *inexhaustive* rules. As their name indicates, when applied, exhaustive rules guarantee success; an example is a manual for some electronic device which, if followed to the letter, ensures its operation. Teaching, in turn, requires a set of *inexhaustive* rules,<sup>4,5</sup> whose application, though attentive and careful, does not necessarily guarantee the expected success.

Indeed, while teaching, one cannot rule out the possibility of failure, understood as the failure to obtain success on a particular goal or objective, although teaching goals and objectives with a broader and/or more evaluative character are not object of measurement or accurate determination. They are, rather, objects of evaluation and deliberation due to the meaning attributed to education and the very character and contingencies of the teaching action.

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The author exemplifies this type of rule with the following analogy: “Rules for lion-hunting (we may imagine) tell hunters what they ought to do in trying to bag lions. Such rules cover the details of training, preparation, and the conduct of the hunt. One component set of such rules relating to the hunt may be supposed to be: ‘Aim your loaded gun at the lion; then, when the range and other conditions are right, pull the trigger’. Let us assume that the hunter’s knowledge and skill are excellent, that he interprets the rightness of the conditions correctly, and that he follows this component set of rules to the letter and the other component sets. It is still not guaranteed that some lion will be bagged; the lion may bound away at exactly the crucial moment.” (SCHEFFLER, 1974, p. 86).

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Translator’s note: Excerpt in English has been extracted from SCHEFFLER, Israel. *The Language of Education*. Illinois: Thomas, 1960, p. 70.



The very assumption that the learning outcomes by means of strategies of educational evaluation can attest to the “quality of the teaching” performed does not do justice to the constituent and inseparable elements of school education, even though one can find in the teacher its primary agent. As Passmore (1984) argues, teaching normally presupposes a *triadic relation*, in which “for all X, if X teaches, there must exist someone who, and something that, is taught by X”, and also the interrelationship between these three elements, even though the use of the concept of teaching does not always make the terms of this relation explicit. Similarly, Gatti (2007) considers that teaching relations involve five poles: the student, the teacher, the content, the reference context (forms of theorization) and the work context (the school system in a certain social context). Each of these five poles is complex in its constitution, and such complexity is reflected in the relations established between them in the face of the concrete situations experienced by schools in their pedagogical actions.

Although school teaching is configured as an element that is distinctive and characteristic of the teaching action, it is not an action in which only the teacher participates or that depends only on such professional for teaching to be successful. No one can teach unless it is directed to someone – who, despite the typically abstract view of many teaching methodologies, are real people, immersed in specific, distinctive, historically determined conditions –, nor can there be teaching unless there is something to be taught under certain conditions. In spite of being obvious, this remark is relevant as it is not uncommon to think that teachers’ performance or the quality of their work can be identified on the basis of what knowledge their students demonstrate to have (SILVA; MORICONI; GIMENES, 2013).

Instead of a diffuse response to a question about the best kinds of teaching to be addressed in professional teacher education – as if it were completely feasible to abstract the relationships and the factors in which the instruction by teachers in specific conditions occurs –, it is important to emphasize and reflect on the very meaning of a teaching which may be successful. As Hirst (1973, p. 177) argues:

Successful teaching would seem to be simply teaching which does in fact bring about the desired learning. Good teaching is however much more difficult to discern. I am not even sure that successful learning is a criterion for good teaching. Certainly in a given particular case there is no contradiction in saying that a person was successfully yet badly taught.<sup>6</sup>

Of course, that the teaching activities performed by teachers seek their best execution and, consequently, success in achieving

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Translator’s note: Excerpt in English has been extracted from HIRST, Paul H. What is teaching? In: *Knowledge and the Curriculum*. (International Library of the Philosophy of Education Volume 12): A Collection of Philosophical Papers. New York: Routledge, 2010 [1974], p. 87.

their goals, is not called into question. Nevertheless, efficiency itself can compromise or counteract other educational goals which are as valuable as the acquisition of certain capabilities and knowledge through teaching (SILVA, 2009).

To a large extent, the work of teachers and schools included in the different teaching activities involves values which transcend the criterion of efficiency and pursuit of success. In this sense, Scheffler provides a comprehensive definition of teaching that goes beyond a strictly technical dimension, albeit of major importance:

Teaching may, to be sure, proceed by various methods, but some ways of getting people to do things are excluded from the standard range of the term “teaching”. To teach, in the standard sense, is at some points at least submit oneself to the understanding and independent judgment of the pupil, to his demand for reasons, to his sense of what constitutes an adequate explanation. To teach someone that such and such is the case is not merely to get him to believe it; deception, for example, is not a method or a mode of teaching. Teaching involves further that, if we try to get the student to believe that such and such is the case, we try also to get him to grasp it for reasons that, within the limits of his capacity to grasp, are *our* reasons. (SCHEFFLER, 1974, p. 70)<sup>7</sup>

Accordingly, teaching is not limited to the efficiency with which certain objectives or goals are met or not, but permeates the very meanings conveyed in this activity and its justification based on the way it is performed. Of course, indoctrination is not currently admitted or openly defended as a desirable form of teaching in a school institution, for example.

Guided by the effort to keep and perpetuate a shared world of human values and reasons, teaching – as a characteristic activity of school education – cannot disregard the relationship between teachers and students and between these subjects and the content and objects of school teaching and learning.

Certainly, school learning is a process mediated subjectively by several factors which condition and interfere with the dispositions of the students. It is expected that, due to educational actions, students learn certain things, but there is no identical learning in all the disciplines. Somehow, this work condition demanded by students – the public to whom the school work in its different configurations and age groups is intended – implies a teaching action which encompasses the challenges related not so much to “motivation”, but especially to stimulating students’ interest in what is being taught, in the knowledge acquired during the school experience and in the act of learning:

<sup>7</sup>  
Translator’s note: Excerpt  
in English extracted from  
SCHEFFLER, Israel. *The  
Language of Education*.  
Springfield, Illinois:  
Thomas, 1960, p. 57-58

While motivation is a kind of personal, mental affair, interest is always something outside of ourselves, something that touches us and moves us to study, think and practice. [...] The school becomes a time/space of the *inter-esse* – of that which is shared between us, the world in itself. At that moment, students are not individuals with specific needs who choose where they want to invest their time and energy; they are exposed to the world and invited to take an interest in it; a moment in which true *commun*-ication is possible. (MASSCHELEIN; SIMONS, 2013, p. 52, authors' emphasis)<sup>8</sup>

Despite the crucial importance of observing some of the students' learning outcomes, one must be attentive to the practices of teachers and, more precisely, of school teaching which contributed to achieving these outcomes and which, besides that, are consistent with what is expected of school education. Also, distinction should be made, according to Masschelein and Simons (2013, p. 49), between (school) education and the mere accumulation of learning, since:

[...] formation is typical for learning in school. Learning involves the strengthening and expansion of the *existing I*, for example, through the accumulation of skills or the expanding of one's knowledge base. Learning in this sense implies an extension of one's own life-world, adding something. The learning process remains introverted – a reinforcement or extension of the ego and therefore a development of identity. In formation, however, this I and one's life-world are brought into constant play from the outset. Formation thus involves constantly going outside of oneself or transcending oneself – going beyond one's own life-world by means of practice and study.<sup>9</sup>

Thinking and conceiving school education specifically as formation is not the same as ensuring that every school teaching activity is successful in relation to learning objectives, even though such objectives may be desirable and relevant. In a way, attention to the formative process one wants to provide students with in the school setting presupposes a previous formation: teacher education itself through which the future teacher, “transcending himself”, learns to be a teacher, seeing the meaning and the intricacies of his profession.

Thus, the concern with detailing more clearly and objectively what is understood as teaching action and the knowledge and skills that inform it should not be taken for an intention to offer an exhaustive view of what teachers “should be”, “should do” or what pedagogical methodologies they “should follow”. Anyway, this would not be in line with the dynamic and diverse reality in which teachers live and work,

<sup>8</sup> Translator's note: Excerpt in English has been extracted from MASSCHELEIN, Jan; SIMONS, Maarten. *In defense of the school. A public issue*. Leuven: TStorme, 2013 [2012], p. 48.

<sup>9</sup> Translator's note: Excerpt in English has been extracted from MASSCHELEIN, Jan; SIMONS, Maarten. *In defense of the school. A public issue*. Leuven: TStorme, 2013 [2012], p. 45-46.

nor with the very constitutional principle which states the “pluralism of ideas and pedagogical conceptions”, present in article 205 (section III), and which was included by *Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional* – LDB [Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education] – (Law no. 9394/96) in article 3 (section III). Understanding and adopting this constitutional principle should not be confused, however, with some distorted form of exercise of teaching autonomy or of the joint work carried out by a school to favor what we would hardly consider relevant to school education. As Azanha (1998, p. 14) reminds us, the relevance of this constitutional principle lies:

[...] precisely in the fact that it is the translation at the school level of the very foundation of democratic coexistence, which is the acceptance of differences. Because the simple fact that each school, in the exercise of its autonomy, prepares and executes its school pedagogical project does not eliminate the risk of suppression of differences *nor even the possibility that there are school practices which continually frustrate an authentic education for citizenship*. In fact, school autonomy disconnected from the ethical assumptions of the educational task may promote the emergence and reinforcement of feelings and attitudes contrary to democratic coexistence. (Emphasis added)

The affirmation of the autonomy of schools and teachers does not mean reducing it to a personal choice, of private character of the institutional agents, but highlighting different and adjusted ways to carry out an education that is more qualified and attentive to its ends. Therefore, the autonomy of both schools and teachers “becomes important only if it means autonomy of the educational task” (AZANHA, 1998, p. 13).

Stipulating and reflecting on what is characteristic of the teaching action – and of the different kinds of knowledge that justify and inform it – does not mean therefore indicating a rigid or safe way, but rather pointing out some criteria to qualify and indicate the very exercise of teacher and school autonomy. Thus, there is no questioning of the merit of teachers and schools reflecting on and choosing which methodological approaches to use, which teaching content linked to school disciplines to address – in view of the curriculum proposal adopted in their school or education system –, or of the possibility of planning and participating in the development of the pedagogical proposal of the school where they work, which is provided for by *Lei de Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional* currently in force (BRASIL, 9394/96) in articles 12, 13 and 14.

However, the following are excluded from the perspective of teacher and school autonomy: to choose whether to teach or not to teach, to plan or not to plan the teaching activities, to participate or not to participate in the preparation of the pedagogical proposal of the school, to mention only a few examples of an arguable exercise of autonomy. In fact, those conducts may be taken as examples of questionable actions which escape the criteria of professional judgment of the teaching action.

In these terms, the stipulation and greater detailing of the references of the teaching action do not impose a standard or mechanical action on teachers, nor do they suggest which specific theoretical approach teachers should follow to carry out their work, but they allow identifying the types of knowledge and capabilities which delimit and clarify the merit and the specificity of their action.

The references of the teaching action presented here are organized firstly in three big dimensions called: *teacher professional knowledge*; *teacher professional practice*; and *teacher professional engagement*.<sup>10</sup> On the basis of the three stages of this investigation, according to a specific methodological approach, the dimensions and principles of action contained in them have undergone significant modifications, starting with the definition of the dimensions which guide the organization of the references of the teaching action. It is worth highlighting the fact that the dimensions and the references of the teaching action which inform them do not presuppose mastering only a set of teaching theories and methodologies. Accordingly, some caveats are necessary.

The very formulation presented here between the dimensions of *teacher professional knowledge* and *teacher professional practice*, for example, may lead one to believe – erroneously, it is worth remembering – in some evaluative hierarchy between different types of knowledge; in this case, a kind of knowledge of theoretical character which would condition its “correct application” later or some kind of practical derivation, assuming the place of theory is more valued or higher.

The construction of references resulting from this work should not be understood as a synthesis of the latest findings of educational research, or as a set of knowledge and capabilities which have proven to be more effective or necessarily guided by scientific authority. In fact, as we seek to stipulate and discuss some references which specify and guide aspects of teaching activities, based on the work with teachers from school systems and scholars of the teacher education field, we are aware that no scientific theory and instrumental would be able to ensure its appropriateness, accuracy or infallibility.

We do not intend to examine in detail the complexity and the magnitude of possible relations between theory and practice within

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The names of the dimensions adopted in the research were inspired by the educational policy of Australia.

the teaching practice. However, it may be interesting to reflect a little more on the role of propositional knowledge – characteristic of theoretical formulations – in relation to some knowledge evidenced by a particular practice, that is, the characteristic ways of doing certain things, such as teaching in its specific locus: the school institution (CARVALHO, 2013, p. 57).

In this regard, Gilbert Ryle (2002) provides us with a quite well-known distinction between propositional knowledge, *know that*, and operational knowledge, *know how*. In fact, some activities require the mastery of certain information, without which the activity is unfeasible. Azanha (1987, p. 75) offers us an interesting argument about it: the act of playing chess requires one to *know that*, i.e., one does not play chess without knowing its rules, which does not mean that mastering the rules is the same as *playing chess well*. It is just the condition of execution of this activity. In contrast, the act of teaching consists of *know how*, an activity that does not dispense with rules to guarantee its execution. It is entirely possible to imagine and even observe the practice of university professors who, even without any pedagogical education, can be recognized as good professors. Therefore,

The activity of teaching seems to be more of an example of *know how* rather than of *know that*, i.e., it is more about knowing how than knowing certain rules and applying them. If we say that someone *knows how to teach*, this necessarily means that he succeeds in his purpose and that he follows this or that rule accessorially or occasionally. (AZANHA, 1987, p. 76)

By understanding teaching as a *know how to do*, the author advances in addressing the relationship between theories present in the educational field – not infrequently openly capable of instructing teachers and schools on what they “should” or “need” to do – and teaching practices encompassed in the activity of teaching:

In this case, there may be rules to assess the outcome of the activity, but not to regulate it. The rules of logic allow us to evaluate an argumentation, not to create it. It is even possible to say that the knowledge of the rules of evaluation of an activity can somehow guide the execution of the activity, but they cannot guarantee its success. (AZANHA, 1987, p. 76)

As highlighted earlier, the very recognition of teaching as an *inexhaustive* activity (SCHEFFLER, 1974) is crucial for better delimiting the role of theory in teacher education, perhaps not exactly where one would normally do it. Insofar as we understand that teaching

means teaching someone something, teaching presupposes mastering concepts and knowledge, although such mastery does not affect how this teaching should be done disregarding who will be taught, in what context and under which specific conditions.

Thus, by stipulating and organizing some references of the teaching action based on the dimensions of teacher's knowledge, practice and engagement, we recognize some logical precedence of certain knowledge in relation to practice: to teach certain aspects of organic chemistry or Brazilian literature, for example, one assumes the possession of information, concepts and approaches typical of such areas of knowledge. However, this does not imply, in any way, assuming that these dimensions are rigid or that they involve a previous and evaluative order of what the teaching action is. In these terms, understanding the references of the teaching action presupposes an initial and in-service teacher education process which involves a wide range of knowledge of both types, *know that* and *know how*, capable of supporting the decisions and practices of the teacher.

It is this professional teacher education, promoted from the access to different types of foundations, theories and even practical prescriptions, that can provide not only future teachers, but also teachers in service, with confronting and thinking about their profession in a particular way, reflecting on the meaning and sense of the work done in a school institution, inquiring about the purpose of teaching a given discipline in diverse contexts and to different audiences, immersed in a characteristic institution, and on the criteria by means of which one can judge the success and value of what and how one teaches.

On the other hand, even though one recognizes a clear link between the academic and scientific knowledge produced in the educational field and most of the references stipulated here, it is not exactly their theoretical or *scientific* status that is at stake. The meaning and intention of this study denote, therefore, a *programmatic character*, in the sense given to it by Scheffler (1974). Seeking to define minimally and objectively some actions and capabilities which should be present in the work of teachers transcends any attempt to describe a given reality.

To the extent that *programmatic definitions* are linked to ethical and political principles and seek to give expression to action programs (SCHEFFLER, 1974, p. 29), it is this practical and operational role that characterizes the meaning of this investigation. Thus, the stipulation of references of the teaching action, by means of the research process described below, reveals principles of action able to translate and clarify some technical and political aspects which constitute the work of the teacher and which can, to some extent, foster debate on the professional character, the education and the improvement of the work conditions of teachers.



## METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

From the perspective outlined above, the general objective of this study, as stated at the beginning of this text, was the construction of references which emerge as factors of qualification of the teaching work in the context of teacher performance in school education in Brazil. The specific objectives of validating these references in their constructs and performing their empirical validation considering aspects of the Brazilian school culture stem from the general objective.

We expect the parameters constituted by this research to support continuing and initial teacher education processes, as well as to work as support for the monitoring and evaluation of the teaching action from a formative perspective, aiming to consolidate teaching professionalization processes.

At first, we conducted a survey and study of documents and national and international literature on the subject. This procedure allowed the construction of a theoretical framework to support the research objectives. We also prepared a preliminary form of the three central axes, with specific descriptive categories, as references for the qualification of teaching actions in early childhood, primary and secondary education, namely: *professional knowledge*, *professional practice* and *professional engagement*. Each axis was the object of a specific conceptualization initially validated by the research team and an external consultant.

After the first attempt to constitute references was consolidated, we started the fieldwork and the empirical validation of the references. The field research was conducted in two stages, with teachers from different educational levels, educational coordinators and specialists in teacher education. This process is described below.

## FIELD RESEARCH AND VALIDATION OF REFERENCES

Field research was carried out by means of what we called *operational discussion groups*. The finding that human relational groups are essential elements in the constitution of people, ideas and conceptions, concepts, pre-concepts, prejudices, and knowledge supports the research approach by means of groups and their dynamics. Group work generates learning in the exchanges that it provides, creating knowledge, bringing to consciousness, with this learning, elements which give meaning to actions or situations (PICHON-RIVIÈRE, 1998; VIGOTSKY, 1990; WALLON, 1968, 1979; MAISONNEUVE, 1965). Gayotto (1992) points out that the group, because of its historical significance, is a privileged object in the development of knowledge, since the constitution of our subjectivity, our psyche, occurs in a trajectory of group experiences.

On those grounds, an operational discussion group is proposed as a means of study for this research. To characterize it, on the one hand, we use the methodology of discussion groups and, on the other, the methodology of operational groups, whose partial intersection allows characterizing an operational discussion group.

The use of discussion groups in social research is quite common, and is thus an established method. As the name implies, we start from a group previously selected according to criteria which meet the research objectives, and to which the discussion of a specific topic is proposed, freeing participants to take their course of ideas and exchanges. The discussion process is important because it aims to gather diverse elements, opinions, and ideas regarding the topic, with no intention of consensus or conclusion through some proposal or any other action. The discursive content that emerges is the material expected for the purposes of an investigation of a given problem. The facilitator, monitor or coordinator of the discussions should interfere little, not to express opinions, and only maintain a certain organization of the work, helping all to express themselves. He can use a small script on the theme aspects relevant to the investigation. But it is not appropriate that the discussion group is fully guided by such script – which is a memory for the facilitator –, because it can interfere with the opinions and exchanges and thus direct answers.

The operational group was initially a therapy idealized in the late 1940s by Pichon-Rivière (1998, 1994), and its proposal was altered in the course of its employment. The group work in this approach has a task which guides the work, and thus becomes a process of learning, of production of new knowledge. For Bastos (2010), learning in the operational groups is translated into a critical reading of reality, with its concerns and inquiries. To this end, it is important not only the presence and action of a group coordinator who poses questions, who problematizes and guides the execution of the task, but also the presence of an observer who records the events and analyzes with the coordinator key aspects of group's movement.

After some time, the proposal and the use of therapeutic operational groups were extended, with the necessary adjustments, to other areas, notably human resources and education. As noted in the literature (CARNIEL, 2008; OSÓRIO, 2000; MUNARI; RODRIGUES, 1996), operational groups are groups focused on one task, which can be either the unveiling of interpersonal relationships, emotions, motivations, etc. or the acquisition or construction of knowledge about something, knowledge which has not been developed or which each participant is not fully aware of. In the latter condition, the operational group aims to bring out conceptions, and to confront, deconstruct or reconstruct, and organize them. It has the objective of allowing participants to operate,

understanding the dynamics of the operation, that is, developing an activity of exchange of ideas that leads to the resolution of ambiguities, deadlocks or conflicts of meaning in relation to the theme of the work, in a way that is clear, explicit to everyone during its construction.

In the convergence of the characteristics of discussion groups as an investigative means, with some aspects of the operational groups aimed at building knowledge, we have conceived the operational discussion group in this work as a group essentially centered on a task which involves building integrated knowledge on an issue called into question. The operational discussion group proposed for this study can be characterized as a conversation group which has a theme/dilemma which is the focus of the discussion and which, after the exchange of ideas and opinions which constitute a discursive knowledge shared and discussed between its members – regarding the theme –, has a specific task related to it. The group's objective is to perform this task; therefore, it is operational, it is based on the relational-discursive process, but goes beyond it by building something in a minimally convergent collective way. The proposed work is the construction and organization of knowledge that is sparse and, in general, little developed among the participants. Conducting an operational discussion group is grounded on the proposals of work with group dynamics, and this is a type of group that has a job to perform. The constitution of each group must meet the nature of the object to be researched and of the questions posed in relation to it.

## CONSTITUTION OF GROUPS

In the case of this study, we decided to form groups with teachers working in early childhood, primary and secondary education and specialists involved in the work done in teaching at those levels of education. The methodology of work with groups signals that the number of participants should not exceed eleven or twelve people, not only to allow more effective participation of each person in the discussion process, but also to facilitate the involvement of all in the proposed task. Groups should not be very small (fewer than five people). In this research, we worked with operational discussion groups in two stages, and in each of them there were six groups, composed respectively by: early childhood teachers; teachers from the early years of primary education; teachers from the late years of primary education; secondary school teachers; educational coordinators and specialists in teacher education in higher education.

The operational discussion group of each segment consisted of ten participants. The desired profile for the formation of groups of teachers currently working in early childhood, primary and secondary education

was: qualified teachers, “considered good” by peers or managers. We contacted professionals indicated by educational supervisors, educational coordinators, school principals, as well as reference professionals in the area. Educational supervisors and teachers of early childhood, primary and secondary education indicated the educational coordinators. For the constitution of the group of specialists in teacher education in higher education, we turned, in the academic context, to the indication of educators of undergraduate courses in different areas of knowledge, with experience and production in the field of teacher education.

We sought to ensure that the composition of the operational discussion groups with teachers and other professionals of early childhood, primary and secondary education was heterogeneous with respect to education systems, that is, we invited teachers and coordinators of different public and private schools. Also, in the teacher education group, there were professors from public and private universities.

## **METHODOLOGICAL DETAILS OF THE STAGES OF FIELD RESEARCH AND VALIDATION OF REFERENCES**

Each operational discussion group was conducted by two researchers. Each meeting lasted three hours. One of the researchers led the group’s work and the other took notes on participations and assisted in monitoring the discussions, especially when subgroups were formed for the proposed tasks. The discussions were recorded when carried out by the whole group, with the consent, duly signed and dated, of the participants.

In the first stage, the script of activities was organized in five moments: a) in the first moment, the coordinator researcher presented the research and detailed the work proposed, and then participants introduced themselves; b) in the second moment, called warming up, there was brainstorming for a general discussion of the question “What are the characteristics of a teacher who performs his job well in school?”; c) in the third moment, the participants were randomly divided into three subgroups and assigned the task of detailing the question and preparing a synthesis. They were asked to elect a rapporteur to record the synthesis of the discussion on flip chart sheets; d) in the fourth moment, each subgroup presented its synthesis to the others. The sheets with the records of the subgroups were displayed on the wall for everybody to see them; e) in the fifth and last moment, the researcher asked the large group to observe the syntheses of each subgroup. The intention was to provoke in-depth discussion and problematize the syntheses and statements from questions such as: “Is something missing? What

is superfluous? In order to do x, y and z, what is it necessary to know? Would you like to add some other aspect to the discussion?"

Finally, the researcher proposed that the large group thought of a possibility of grouping the characteristics proposed and discussed. With the notes and transcripts of the recordings of the discussions in each group, an analysis of the proposals was detailed and a final synthesis of each operational discussion group with the groupings of the characteristics proposed by the participants was conducted. Once the data were systematized, the research team held regular meetings in order to reformulate the preliminary version, constituting a new version of the references, arranging them according to the three dimensions mentioned above: teacher professional knowledge, professional practice and professional engagement. This task involved analyzing and discussing each dimension and the characteristics presented in the operational discussion groups, defining and detailing each category and, finally, writing a menu that adequately characterized each dimension.

In the second stage, seven months later, this reformulated version was submitted again to each operational discussion group which had worked in the first stage both to empirically validate the axes, categories and subcategories, and to discuss, revise and consolidate the language used. This second stage was conducted in three moments. In the first moment, we aimed to resume the work done in the first stage and the decisions made in the first round of the operational groups; the dimensions were presented with explanations on how categories and their definitions were structured. In the second moment, the group, organized into three subgroups, was asked to analyze the dimensions. Each group received the three dimensions to have a view of the whole. However, the proposal was to focus on only one dimension, which was specific for each subgroup, which was tasked with reading the menu of the dimension, the categories and their definitions, and with discussing and recording observations in the text itself in the spaces reserved for this purpose. Subgroups were to analyze the relevance of the dimensions and categories, the clarity of writing, coherence, and the meaning of the categories and their definitions. They were asked to evaluate the following aspects: a) whether the menu properly characterized the dimension, whether the group would suggest changes or supplementation; b) whether the categories proposed for the dimension they were analyzing sufficiently portrayed such dimension, whether they would include or exclude any category; c) whether the definitions of each category were relevant and portrayed them well; whether the group would suggest changes or supplementation. In the third and last moment, the subgroups presented their analysis with assessments and general comments for collective discussion and written record.

Upon completion of this stage, we proceeded to the transcript of the speech and the analysis of the contributions of each operational discussion groups. The research team worked on the revision of the previous version of the references, and constructed a new version, incorporating suggestions, as well as reworking on categories and subcategories based on the group discussion process.

This new version, based on the groups' work, was submitted to the group of teacher educators for their criticism and suggestions, which led to the consolidation of the final version.

We developed a synthesis text organized by operational discussion group with details<sup>11</sup> of the two stages of discussion. The intention was to put in evidence the procedures of investigation and construction of category parameters, as well as to share what we have called references of the teaching action. It is necessary to report that, during the analysis and discussion of the references by the group of early childhood education teachers, the discomfort of teachers with the fact that the document was distant from the current proposals of early childhood education became evident. Criticism lied mainly in the fact that the proposal was guided by a "model" for primary education focused on teaching, as well as in the use of inappropriate terms for early childhood education. We decided thus to adapt the references to the specificities of this educational segment. For early childhood education, a specific framework was designed,<sup>12</sup> incorporating the suggestions of the operational discussion group and of two professionals of the area, who acted as judges.

## REFERENCES OF THE TEACHING ACTION

As highlighted above, the references are organized firstly in three dimensions called: teacher professional knowledge, professional practice and professional engagement. Each dimension consists of a menu, followed by a set of categories with their definitions. This is a didactic and descriptive presentation, but one must always remember that both the dimensions and the categories presented intersect. Although their presentation is linear, to consider them, it is necessary to keep in mind the interrelationships which characterize the whole, in a recursive process, denoting thus their real complexity, as we try to suggest in the following figure.

<sup>11</sup> Available at Silva and Almeida (2015).

<sup>12</sup> References for early childhood education will not be presented here. They are available at Silva and Almeida (2015).

**FIGURE 1**  
**REFERENCES OF THE TEACHING ACTION**



We must reiterate that the research and proposal of criteria which can reference and objectify not only the everyday actions of teachers, but also the sense of their professional activities involve the effort to specify and, in some cases, objectify what would be characteristic of teaching. This is by no means a manual or recipe – there are no recipes for autonomous and creative practice. However, it is worth reflecting on the stipulation and discussion of the analysis criteria of the teaching work which, far from regulating an action, can provide parameters for its evaluation in view of what is expected from public school education.



## CHART 1

## DIMENSION: TEACHER PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE

DIMENSION: TEACHER PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE	
<p><b>Menu:</b> The identification of professional knowledge comprises the acquisition of skills which support educational practice in schools. Such knowledge is composed of information and concepts that will be object of teaching, in coordination with the mastery of the field of pedagogical knowledge in its historical, philosophical, sociological, psychological, and didactic foundations. The presence of professional knowledge requires a teaching practice able to make decisions recognizing both the ethical principles inherent to the educational task and the different conditions and circumstances which involve school practice.</p>	
CATEGORIES	DETAILS
1.1 Masters his area of knowledge.	Demonstrates mastery of the area of knowledge in which he works, its theories, main concepts and features which distinguish it from other areas of knowledge. Realizes that his area of knowledge, while maintaining its distinctive characteristics, changes constantly. Keeps updated on the main trends of innovation and/or extension of his area of knowledge.
1.2 Understands the relation of his area of knowledge and other areas of knowledge, showing an interdisciplinary vision.	Understands the relation between his area of knowledge and other areas of knowledge. Realizes that the same object or theme can be approached in several ways from different theories and their perspectives of analysis.
1.3 Masters the content with which he is to work on in his teaching activity.	Masters the contents that are object of teaching at the level where he works. Relates the contents which he works on with other disciplines in the school curriculum.
1.4 Understands the school curriculum.	Knows, in general terms, the assumptions that can support a school curriculum. Knows and reflects on the curricular proposal of the school unit and/or education system where he works. Understands the different levels of difficulty and depth of the curriculum knowledge and its articulation with the pedagogical project of the school unit.
1.5 Understands the foundations of early childhood, primary and secondary education.	Knows the historical, philosophical and sociological foundations of the school constitution, of educational theories and school practices. Knows the imperative of the unrestricted right to education and its historical, political, social and cultural implications. Relates the unrestricted right to education and the foundations of early childhood, primary and secondary education to the specific context of his school.
1.6 Understands the sociocultural contexts of students and their impact on learning processes.	Knows the social, cultural and psychological factors which constitute the school life of students and their learning. Recognizes general and specific difficulties of school learning and masters different means and practical alternatives to address them.
1.7 Masters the pedagogical knowledge of the content he teaches.	Recognizes the difference between mastering the area of knowledge that he works on and its organization as a discipline. Knows different didactic procedures and their relevance and appropriateness to the level of teaching at which he works. Knows interdisciplinary approaches to the teaching contents.
1.8 Masters the knowledge on student learning evaluation in relation to the contents that he teaches.	Knows criteria, instruments and procedures of evaluation and monitoring of student learning in relation to the content that he teaches. Knows different forms of assessment of school learning according to the general and specific educational objectives of the knowledge that he works on. Understands evaluation in the classroom as a means of promoting student learning. Understands evaluation in the classroom as a means to improve teaching activities.
1.9 Knows the models and results of school external assessments.	Knows the national and regional systems of large-scale assessment of school performance. Interprets the educational meaning of the evaluation matrices used and the results disseminated.

**CHART 2****DIMENSION: TEACHER PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE**

DIMENSION: TEACHER PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE	
<p><b>Menu:</b> Professional practice comprises the aspects involved in creating learning conditions thanks to the commitment with the development of all students in their diversity. This dimension involves the skills of planning and promoting teaching situations which favor problematization, questions, curiosity, and investigation, moments when students reelaborate relations with the learning content. Considers the previous knowledge of students and different forms of interaction and socialization. This dimension encompasses the promotion of a climate favorable to relationships of trust and respect, the use of varied procedures appropriate to teaching objectives and contents, as well as the continuous monitoring of learning in order to support students, considering their differences, and the improvement of educational practice.</p>	
CATEGORY	DETAILS
<b>2.1</b> Defines learning objectives and content and plans teaching activities based on them.	Determines the teaching objectives and content considering the knowledge he plans to work on with students. Sets objectives which include the development of abilities, attitudes and values. Prepares lesson plans and other educational activities, taking into account the previous knowledge of students in a manner consistent with the learning objectives and content.
<b>2.2</b> Proposes learning objectives which offer challenges appropriate to students with different abilities and characteristics.	Considers the educational needs and interests of his students, their contributions and previous knowledge. Offers challenges appropriate to the possibilities of students in their diversity. Proposes teaching activities considering various modes of development and expression of knowledge by the student (speaking, reading, writing, arts, motor, etc.). Proposes diverse activities to encourage maximum participation of each student with collaboration. Guides students' study procedures.
<b>2.3</b> Organizes lesson plans and/or didactic sequences which promote motivation for learning.	Shares with students the objectives and the reasons they were selected. Establishes teaching strategies which are challenging, coherent and meaningful to students. Ensures that the students realize that the work proposed to them is within their reach and that it is interesting to do it. Proposes activities which involve students cognitively and emotionally. Creates a climate in which the work being done is appreciated with actions which encourage students to continue working.
<b>2.4</b> Addresses teaching content in a way students can understand it.	Treats the lesson content with conceptual rigor and in a way students can understand it. Uses several approaches to the same subject through different didactic procedures.
<b>2.5</b> Organizes educational times and spaces adequately for the planning of teaching and for learning objectives.	Uses various forms of grouping students and organizing activities according to the objectives that he wants to achieve. Uses the times and spaces available for teaching according to the educational intentions and the students' learning needs.
<b>2.6</b> Promotes a lesson climate guided by relationships of trust and respect.	Constitutes and ensures a framework of relationships in which acceptance, trust, mutual respect, and collaboration prevail. Creates a safe and organized environment which encourages the participation of all and promotes cooperation and group cohesion. Promotes fluid communication with students and between them. Mediates personal conflicts.
<b>2.7</b> Plans and conducts student learning evaluations in a manner consistent with the educational objectives.	Uses relevant strategies to assess student learning according to the teaching objectives. Reconciles the levels of difficulty of what is being evaluated with the levels of difficulty of what has been taught. Uses different tools to obtain different data which compose a broad picture of student performance.
<b>2.8</b> Is attentive to the progress of students, guiding them to reflect on their progress and needs.	Records his observations on the collective and individual performance of students, when applicable. Provides students with constant feedback and encourages them to think and talk about it. Appreciates the efforts of students. Creates a motivating environment which fosters a positive self-concept of students.
<b>2.9</b> Uses the results of his evaluations to improve and/or redesign his teaching activities.	Uses evaluation not only to promote student learning, but as a means of improving the teaching and educational practice. Considers student performance for researching and selecting new learning resources and materials to qualify his teaching actions.

## CHART 3

## DIMENSION: TEACHER PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT

DIMENSION: TEACHER PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT	
<p><b>Menu:</b> Regarding the teacher's action, the sense of engagement is reflected in the ways he shows, in his work environment, a spirit of cooperation and partnership, with awareness of the individual and collective responsibilities of the school for the learning and human development of the students. Understands the ethical and social meaning of his action. Seeks to develop professionally in different ways, in pursuit of continual improvement of his work and of that of his peers. Contextualizes his work and considers the community, their conditions and contributions. Knows the system in which he works and educational policies, questioning and considering them in relation to the school context.</p>	
CATEGORY	DETAILS
<p><b>3.1</b> Shares the common responsibilities of the school with his peers and the management team.</p>	<p>Values collaborative work in school and the community dimension as educational and cultural integration factors. Works together with his peers and the management team to build a school climate of cooperation and encouragement to students. Cooperates with the construction of coexistence in ways which create an environment which facilitates studies and constructive intergenerational relationships. Makes decisions as a team and commits to complying with them.</p>
<p><b>3.2</b> Identifies needs of professional development, acting according to them.</p>	<p>Reflects systematically on his practice, learns from his experience and from that of his peers and reorients his pedagogical actions. Identifies his needs of professional development, seeks ways to meet his needs and knows how to define priorities. Welcomes suggestions from peers and the management team about his continuing education. Engages in learning communities to keep updated continuously and consistently, using different means of information and formation. Participates actively in professional development initiatives.</p>
<p><b>3.3</b> Seeks for information and reflects on his profession, the school system in which he works and the educational policies in force.</p>	<p>Recognizes the professional character of his work. Seeks for information on the educational policies in force, constructing a view of the context. Knows the rules governing the organization of the education system in which he works. Knows the guidelines for the teaching career in the education system where he works. Participates in the debate on the work conditions and career in the education system where he works. Develops a critical view of the proposals of educational policies.</p>
<p><b>3.4.</b> Keeps updated on advances in knowledge and teaching practices related to his work.</p>	<p>Follows the development and innovation of his area of knowledge in relation to his work in the school. Keeps updated on new approaches and research developed in the area of knowledge in which he works. Knows and uses information mechanisms, dissemination of research and new technologies related to his area of teaching. Participates in study groups, collaborates with colleagues in the school in the search for teaching alternatives, creates and shares educational experience. Participates in events of his professional area and shares information.</p>
<p><b>3.5</b> Relates to parents and guardians in a collaborative and respectful way.</p>	<p>Recognizes the importance of parents and guardians for pupils' study and values their contributions. Shows understanding and respect for parents and their diversity. Communicates with parents and guardians clearly and respectfully. Engages parents in the discussion and understanding of the learning and development of their children aiming at their sociocognitive development. Encourages parents and guardians to contribute to the school life of students as much as possible. Engages in school projects and activities aimed at developing the relationship between the school and parents and guardians.</p>
<p><b>3.6</b> Works ethically and consistently with the principles of citizenship and human rights.</p>	<p>Works based on the principle of human respect and the social role of his profession. Acts guaranteeing diversity in the area of equality of rights. Sees parents and students, staff and peers as subjects of rights, welcoming them as equals. Recognizes that social, cultural, religious, and other differences do not stigmatize people. Recognizes that children and adolescents deserve consideration of their social status in their stage of development.</p>

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