

Teachers and teacher education gaps in learning evaluation: evidence and questions^{1*}

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Abstract

The present article problematizes teacher education in learning evaluation based on evidence that licensure programs that provide technical and theoretical training on this topic are rare, which leads to the reproduction of models the teacher had been exposed to as a student and of the schools he starts to teach at without the necessary criticism, thus resulting in learning evaluation procedures, instruments and criteria with no validity or reliability, with a heavy impact on students' educational trajectory and which do not allow using the results to organize the teaching and learning process. The work is founded on bibliographic research, observations of eight Class Councils at a school in the Municipal Education System of São Paulo and answers of 1,083 teachers to a questionnaire administered in a continuing education course on evaluation in the same education system. From the observations, we found that the teacher's appreciation on whether the student should be retained or advance to the next grade are based on non-cognitive sources such as behavior and participation. In addition, the knowledge gaps demonstrated in the answers to the questionnaires show poor or, in many cases, no training related to evaluation, with mistakes that directly affect the evaluation practice, from the use of unsuitable procedures and instruments to the adoption of varying, imprecise criteria that compromise the whole evaluation process, to the detriment of students. The work shows we should urgently resume the debate on the evaluation practices carried out in schools, which is currently eclipsed by the centrality of external evaluations in the Brazilian educational arena.

Keywords

Teacher education – Learning evaluation – Teaching and learning

1- The whole set of data that supports this study's results was published in this article.

***** The author take full responsibility for the translation of the text, including titles of books/articles and the quotations originally published in Portuguese.

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Introduction

Educational evaluation as a practice that marks the school's routine is a common activity in teaching. The teacher both evaluates his students periodically and is invited to interact more and more with initiatives organized by external institutions. The role of evaluator is, therefore, part of teachers' functions as defined by law and expressed in notices of public service entrance exams for the position. Evaluative competency is also part of the core of Professional Teaching Guidelines in various countries, as with Canadian provinces like Ontario and Quebec, and in the United States, Argentina, Australia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, England, Finland, Germany, Lebanon, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Portugal, New Zealand, Scotland, Singapore, among other countries. Such documents define the knowledge and skills pertaining to teaching and outline what the teacher is expected to know and do.

However, we found, in the specialist literature on the subject, evidence that this subject is still seldom addressed in licensure programs (GATTI *et al.*, 2010; ROJAS, 2007; SILVA *et al.*, 2016; VILLAS BOAS; SOARES, 2016). Nevertheless, teacher education should encompass, according to Tardif (2013), a repertoire of knowledge based on professional knowledge that is actually used in teachers' work on a regular basis. We consider that this gap in teacher education characterizes what Alavarse (2013) calls the "teacher paradox", since while teacher education is required to guarantee previous contact with the profession's tasks, evaluation is virtually left out.

Therefore, the present article aims to problematize teacher education relating to evaluation, starting from the established fact that the teacher seldom gets technical or theoretical training to evaluate his students, which leads him to reproduce evaluation models he was exposed to as a student, thus resulting in improvised evaluation procedures and instruments that heavily impact students' educational trajectory. We propose reflecting on the effects that a conceptually and technically poor evaluation practice can have on students' educational future, affecting their academic future, making for and even increasing social inequalities, thus transforming them in education inequalities and preventing an equitable treatment in the light of what Dubet (2008) and Crahay (2002) affirm.

This study is founded on bibliographic research and observations of Class Councils, as well as on the answers of teachers to questionnaires administered in a continuing education course on educational evaluation. The data presented here are part of broader research at the master's level (FREITAS, 2019; SIQUEIRA, 2017) and were acquired by means of records of observations of eight Class Councils for classes in the initial and final grades of primary education at a Municipal Primary Education School (EMEF) in the Municipal Education System of São Paulo (RME-SP), from 2014 to 2016, and from answers to questionnaires administered to a sample of 1,083 teachers who attended a Continuing Education Course on Educational Evaluation provided by the Municipal Department of Education of São Paulo (SME-SP) from 2015 to 2016. Even though the results cannot be generalized, the information they express can indicate broader hypotheses and, mainly, reinforce the questions we intend to present here.

We consider that educational evaluation represents an important element of teaching practice, and it constitutes a tool that is inseparable from the monitoring of students' learning, with a direct effect on their school trajectories. Its materialization reflects on the quality of education, and from its full deployment, school trajectories are defined, with a heavy influence even on whether students remain in school or drop out, as Bowers (2019) reveals in relation to the marks that evaluation leaves on students, and which affect even their decision on whether to continue their studies or not, especially in secondary education. Bowers (2019) claims that the teacher's judgment is what actually follows students over their school history, since school flow is predominantly defined by the teacher's appreciation on his students' output, which, in turn, is expressed in numeric or letter grades that underpin decisions on grade retention.

Equity and educational evaluation

The debate about educational evaluation, albeit not recent, remains relevant and present, since the achievement of universal education did not guarantee access to "equality of acquired knowledge", as Crahay (1996, 2002, 2009) stresses. Following the entrance of vast portions of the historically excluded population there came the need for adapting schools to difference and, consequently, for addressing the demands therefrom by adopting an inclusive school conception.

The act of evaluating tasks that students perform on a routine basis is a feature of teaching and, as such, it impacts the delivery of quality education, which is a right established by the Federal Constitution (BRASIL, 1988), reinforced by the Statute on Children and Adolescents (ECA, 1990), guaranteed by the National Education Guidelines and Framework Law (LDB, 1996) and corroborated by the main official documents on curricula, such as the National Basic Education Curriculum Guidelines (DCNEB, 2013) and, more recently, by the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC, 2017). It is clear that the concept of quality based on equal conditions of access and permanence guided the official documents in the field of education during the 1990s and early 2000s; the World Declaration on Education for All, of 1990, had made it one of its goals, and indicated the need for "making access to education universal and promoting equity" (CONFERÊNCIA..., 1990).

In the last thirty years, the official discourse clearly prioritized difference-oriented schooling, with emphasis on the principles of equality and equity. In addition, there is significant academic output in Brazil which, until the late 1980s and early 1990s, denounced teachers' evaluation practice as an instrument of selection and exclusion (HOFFMANN, 1991, 1993; LUCKESI, 1992, 2006; PATTO, 1990; SOUSA, 1991; SOUSA, 1986, 1994), but which curiously gives space to discussions on external evaluations which, over the 1990s and 2000s, gain centrality in the debate about education quality (AFONSO, 1998; ARELARO, 2003; CASTRO, 2000, 2007, 2009; DÍAZ BARRIGA, 2008; ESTEBAN, 2014; FREITAS, 2011; GATTI, 2011; SOUSA; OLIVEIRA, 2010).

Thus, it is remarkable that, although the challenges in internal learning evaluation were largely demonstrated by the literature until the late 1980s, internal evaluation gave

space to external evaluations over the 1990s and 2000s. However, recent research (FREIRE, 2017; SIQUEIRA, 2017) shows that this is not a finished matter, but rather it needs to be resumed and reinserted in the education debate, starting from findings that reveal, in the routine of public primary education schools, hardly any training on educational evaluation, and evaluation conceptions that fail to meet the principle of equity, but instead end up reinforcing pedagogical models that are sometimes exclusionary, sometimes “assistencialist”, guided by stances conveniently adhered to, depending on the situation in question.

Pervaded by contradictions, the school space is a ground of disputes where, for a long time, the merit that was valued materialized in students’ effort, participation and behavior in the classroom. Although the discourse on equality and, more recently, on equity, has entered the debate, Dubet (2008) denounces that popular classes have ascended to school, but the social and initial inequality that characterizes them is ignored, and a meritocratic system prevails which is the foundation of equal opportunities.

In this respect, Crahay (2013) stresses that since the school is situated in a social context, it has an implicit profile of desirable student who adapts to that society’s structures and ways of operating, thus practicing a model of justice according to the principle it stands on, which may be a meritocratic justice, an egalitarian justice or a corrective justice. By meritocratic justice, or the “just recognition for merits” (CRAHAY, 2002, p. 53) we should understand the justice that is based on equal opportunities, disregards inequalities at the start and emphasizes the ideology of gift. Egalitarian justice, in turn, materializes through equal treatment and, while it appears satisfactory at first, it ends up proving insipient, since providing the same treatment to everyone does not represent better learning conditions. Corrective justice, on the other hand, is adequate to serve those who are disadvantaged, as it is founded on equality of results, which prescribes equitable treatment. To Crahay (2013), only corrective justice can overcome the meritocratic model that founds the school.

Whatever the concept of justice the school stands on, evaluation will be instrumental to materializing it, whether by excluding those who do not fit in the profile defined by meritocracy, or by identifying knowledge with a view to creating subsequent practices that can contribute to each student’s learning.

The documents that organize basic education in Brazil’s recent history show alignment with the above mentioned ideas of Crahay and Dubet, with greater attention being paid to students from lower socioeconomic tiers, which imposes on evaluation the challenge of positively discriminating students by identifying their proficiencies in order to develop didactic situations that benefit each student’s learning level, with a view to equality of acquired knowledge at the end of the teaching and learning process.

Teacher education gaps and varying evaluation criteria

For all the importance placed on evaluation, even though it is inherent in teaching practice, the paradox referred to by Alavarse (2013) is a fact, since initial teacher education,

whose bases guide one's entrance into teaching, is insufficient or even destitute with regard to knowledge of conceptual, procedural and technical foundations of evaluation.

In addition to the fact that evaluation determines educational trajectories by determining whether students are retained or advance to the next grade, it is necessary to consider that evaluation is a social act whose impacts are felt in the student's life, thus influencing even his decision to remain in the school environment or not, as shown by the study of Bowers (2019), which revealed a strong relationship between the grades given by teachers and students' remaining in school or dropping out.

His study reaffirms what many works have already revealed about this practice, that it relies on cognitive evidence (academic knowledge or proficiency) and non-cognitive evidence (commitment, effort, attention, participation, engagement, persistence, task completion, etc.) (Cf. BROOKHART, 1994; CIZEK; FITZGERALD; RACHOR, 1995) for grading purposes. To Feldman (2019, p. 1), "when teachers combine social skills, behavior and effort in a single grade, it is impossible to discern the student's strengths and weaknesses in each of these aspects, making the expression of this result vague, confuse and even invalid". The product of this evaluation is a mixture of information that can disguise proficiency *per se* and compromise the measures that could potentially be taken based on the results. Therefore, the grades given to students provide imprecise and misleading information about what they actually know, the author concludes. Teachers' grading can also vary within the same school, according to their comprehension about the student's academic or non-academic performance. Brookhart *et al.* (2016) detected different patterns in the way of evaluating between education systems, schools and teachers, which are owing to: (i) differences in or a lack of classification criteria, (ii) the teacher-evaluator's sternness or clemency, (iii) the quality of the work performed by students, (iv) the proficiency scale used by the teacher, and (v) even a mistake by the teacher. One can also find in the literature differences between the teacher's judgment expressed in grades and students' performance in external learning evaluations, as revealed by Alavarse, Machado and Leme (2013, p. 11), who compared results in Prova São Paulo³ and evaluations conducted by teachers.

[...] In a second-grade class with approximately 40 students, in Portuguese, we found two students who got an NS (not sufficient) in internal evaluations and were retained, although they were classified as adequate and advanced by the Prova São Paulo. On the other hand, we found a student who, in spite of getting an S (sufficient) in his teachers' evaluation, was not able to score above basic in the Prova São Paulo. In the same class, though in Mathematics, this discrepancy remains. Three students were retained by their teachers, although they were classified between levels adequate and advanced in the Prova São Paulo, and six students who got an S (sufficient) from their teachers scored below basic in the Prova São Paulo.

3- Prova São Paulo [São Paulo Test] classified students, based on the proficiency achieved in standardized tests, into four levels: below basic, basic, adequate and advanced. Grades in teachers' internal tests can be: NS (not sufficient), S (sufficient) and P (fully sufficient); students who get an NS are retained (ALAVARSE; MACHADO; LEME, 2013). The test was implemented by the SME during the 2007-2012 period, suspended from 2013 to 2017 and resumed in 2017.

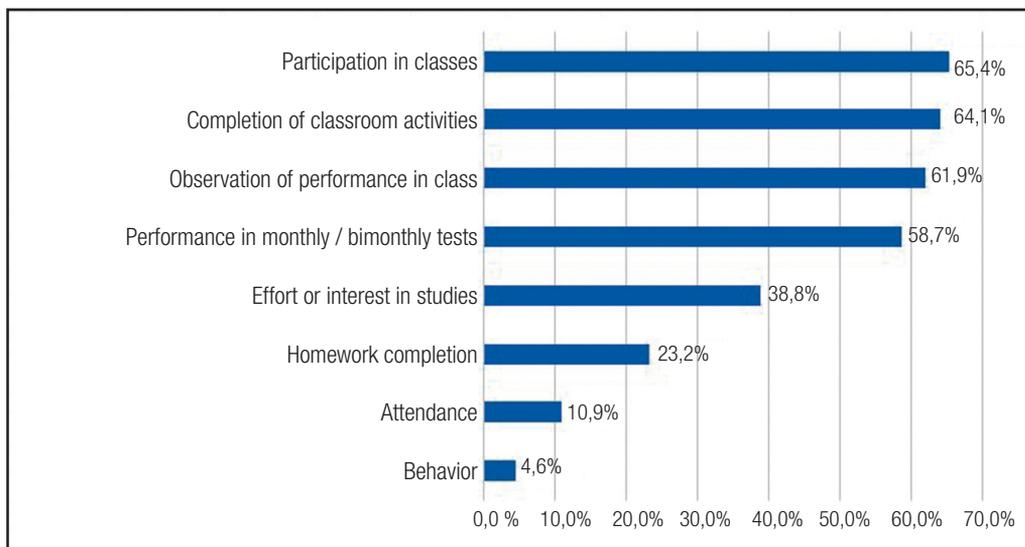
Thus, unequal treatment can manifest in evaluation practices, impact students' educational trajectory (Cf. CORTESE, 2006; CRAHAY, 2002) and suffer from implicit biases of racial, social class and/or gender prejudice, according to Feldman (2019).

In the following sections, we will problematize the evaluation developed by teachers based on data collected by means of questionnaires and records of observations of Class Council meetings.

Analysis of questionnaires

In our study, we detected heavy subjectivity in evaluation on the part of teachers, who indicated student participation in classes as the most used evaluation criterion⁴, with 65.4%, as shown in Chart 1.

Chart 1 – Evaluation criteria*



Source: Freitas (2019, p. 80).

* This questionnaire item allowed the respondent to mark more than one alternative.

However, the observation in the third line above, besides being a subjective aspect, should be considered an evaluation instrument, rather than a criterion. Besides being a conceptual hindrance, the fact that 61.9% of teachers mentioned this aspect can be problematized: what is being observed?

4- Although, strictly speaking, students' participation in classes, for example, is not a learning evaluation criterion, but rather an object of evaluation, we kept the questions about this and other aspects, such as effort, attendance and behavior, due to their presence in teachers' discourses and in our notes, as highlighted by the literature. There is no formal evaluation about these aspects, but it is nevertheless a feature of the evaluation processes conducted by teachers.

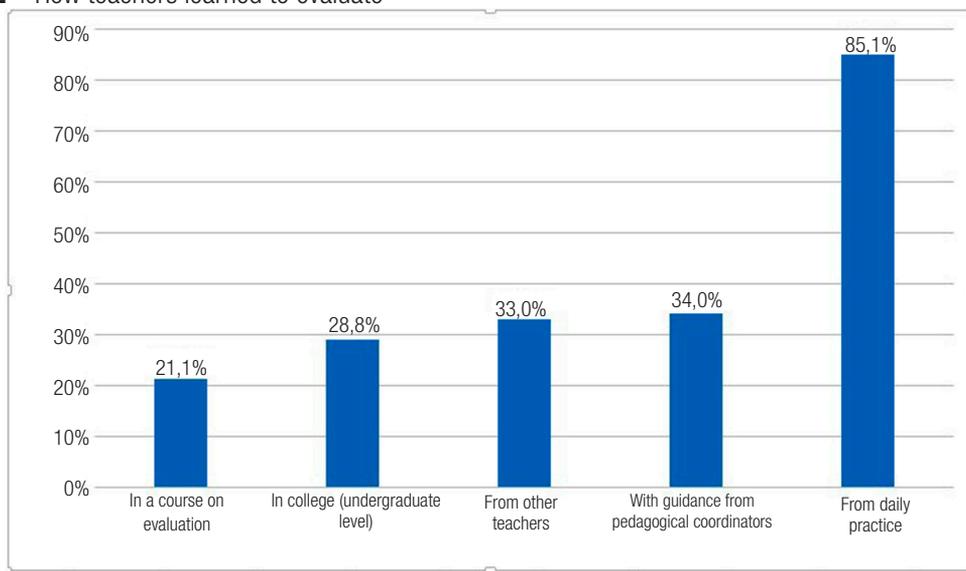
Other aspects that were mentioned as criteria, though to a lesser extent, were students' effort or interest in studies (38.8%), attendance (10.9%) and behavior in the classroom (4.6%). The frequency of subjective criteria in teachers' answers highlights weaknesses in evaluation practice that need to be underscored, given the potential implication of the teacher's judgment for students' educational trajectory. On the other hand, among more objective criteria, 64.1% of teachers said they took into account class activity completion, the second most frequent answer. Students' performance in monthly/bimonthly tests was ranked fourth among teachers' answers, with 58.7%. Homework completion, in turn, was teachers' sixth most used criterion, with 23.2% of answers.

The fact that teachers chose students' behavior and participation as objects of evaluation shows their difficulty evaluating, since albeit relevant for learning, these aspects should not be prioritized by evaluation as they move the focus away from the learning of contents, which is the central goal of teaching activities. In addition, the evaluation of such markedly subjective aspects is usually conducted without the necessary precision, by means of observation procedures without rigor or record. This concern about behavioral aspects also denotes the controlling nature that is still attached to evaluation, and it raises the suspicion that shy or unquiet students, for example, may be disadvantaged when participation and behavior are emphasized as criteria.

Given all the complexity that pervades the field of evaluation practices and their effects on the lives of students, who are continuously evaluated over at least fourteen years of mandatory education, one would expect that evaluation would be given special attention in initial teacher education programs. However, the data collected by means of our questionnaires reaffirm the alarming reality referred to by the literature, revealing that less than 1% of initial teacher education programs include formal content on evaluation (Cf. GATTI *et al.*, 2010), which raises a few questions, for example, how do teachers learn to evaluate if teacher education programs do not approach evaluation, or do so in a superficial manner? In addition, without initial training that prepares them for evaluating, how do teachers evaluate their students? What are the bases they rely on, what are the sources that feed their know-how? And, finally, what would be the impacts of evaluation conducted by teachers without the theoretical and technical knowledge?

Corroborating the training gap in evaluation that is shown by the literature, the data from our study unveil an alarming finding: 85.1% (N = 922) of teachers learned to evaluate from school routine. This finding suggests a level of amateurship or improvisation devoid of theoretical foundations to develop this practice that deserves investigation. Chart 2 below provides an illustration of the ways teachers developed this knowledge.

Chart 2 – How teachers learned to evaluate*



Source: Freitas (2019, p. 80).

* This questionnaire item allowed the respondent to mark more than one alternative.

To 34% of teachers, evaluation expertise was acquired with the support of guidance provided by pedagogical coordinators, which gives these professionals a task they had no specific training to perform either. Another group of teachers, 33%, developed bases for evaluation practice along with more experienced peers, who probably have the same training shortcomings.

In this respect, Tardif (2013, p. 561) emphasizes that “the old knowledge from experience that founded teacher education in *escolas normais* should give its place to specialist knowledge based on university research”. Thus, *savoir-évaluer* as a practice inherent in the teacher’s work should get much instruction in teacher education programs.

Chart 2 also shows that only 28.8% of respondents reported to have studied educational evaluation at undergraduate level, and 21.1% in evaluation courses, which reinforces the urgency for this subject to become part of both initial and continuing teacher education processes. However, there is no evidence on the quality indices for such training, the ideal number of hours to be dedicated to these courses, whether they should be in-person or distance learning courses, and, mainly, the appropriate contents and how they should be worked on.

The finding that teachers learn to evaluate through rather informal means, though the importance of this type of learning should not be denied, underscores the concern about the fact that such expedients do not allow adopting more consistent evaluation processes.

Analysis of class councils

Considering the importance of educational evaluation to equality of acquired knowledge and the finding of insufficient evaluation training available for teachers, we also turned to Class Councils in order to identify the conceptions that found their practice and judgments on their students' activities and, consequently, their consolidation for deciding whether students should advance to the next grade or be retained.

By analyzing documents from the Programa Mais Educação São Paulo, a policy in effect at the time the data were collected, we found that it placed considerable emphasis on evaluation, which was described as “the time the classroom and students' and teachers' work dress up” (SÃO PAULO, 2014b, p. 9). Regulated by Ordinance 5,930/2013⁵, said program's article 15 establishes that

S8 – Every two months, Council Class meetings should be held to ensure the systematic monitoring of progress and hindrances in the teaching and learning process.

In another document, Ordinance 5,941/2013⁶, articles 52 and 53 are dedicated to Class Councils. According to this document,

Art. 52 – Class Council Meetings are times for collective decision making on the continuous process of evaluation, including catch-up measures provided for students when necessary, according to the Political-Pedagogical Project and the principles established by the guidelines in the Educational Regulation.

Art. 53 – The Class Council is formed by the Management and Teaching Team at the Educational Unit; it can be expanded according to the Political-Pedagogical Project, and is to meet every two months, in accordance with guidelines established by specific Ordinance.

The program advises that participation in classes can be a way of evaluating, “considering each student's specific features and personality” (SÃO PAULO, 2014b, p. 16). With regard to participation, the document ponders about the need for criteria to be established for such observation:

It is necessary to question what is actually being evaluated: performance is being considered satisfactory or unsatisfactory due to what? It is important to observe and consider in the evaluation criteria the offered opportunities. (SÃO PAULO, 2014b, p. 15).

Thus, “while access to public school contributes to decreasing social inequalities, the effects of these inequalities impact heavily school outcomes” (SÃO PAULO, 2014a, p. 32). Therefore, the document warns about the risk that the interaction between the

5- Ordinance 5,930/2013 – Provides regulation on the Decree No. 54,452 of 10.10.2013, which institutes the Program for Curricular and Administrative Reorganization, Expansion and Strengthening of the Municipal Education System of São Paulo – “Mais Educação São Paulo”.

6- Ordinance 5,941/2013 – Sets complementary norms to the Decree No. 54,454 of 10.10.2013, which provides guidelines for creating the Educational Regulation on the Municipal Education System Units, as well as other measures.

school unit and social reality might end up increasing the inequalities resulting from the social structure, and it stresses that “only qualification and the relationship with the team impact equity regarding student color/race” (SÃO PAULO, 214a, p. 32). In this context, the Programa Mais Educação São Paulo turns to social quality as a goal in order to achieve quality education, and it lists a number of principles, including the following:

- Social quality as access to knowledge, rather than access to consumption;
- Expanding access and service for the whole population is not at odds with quality pedagogical services;
- Centrality of the student and their learning, be they children, young people or adults;
- Commitment by the management and teaching team to students’ learning. (SÃO PAULO, 2014a, p. 21).

From the analysis of the official documents we infer a conception of equitable educational service with emphasis on a formative and processual evaluation process in which the Class Council is the main body for monitoring students, reflecting and rearranging pedagogical practices. To Dalben (1996), the role of Councils is to guide teachers on the permanent evaluation of students in order to analyze the causes of high and low performance and create conditions for assisting those who show learning difficulties.

On the other hand, Mattos (2005) underscores the fact that, in Councils, teachers tend to manifest their conceptions more freely, which provides a broader view of the pedagogical framework, thus unveiling the school’s intrinsic aspects.

Thus, in analyzing the Class Councils, we aimed at identifying the ways in which teachers express their judgment about their students’ output, as well as their pedagogical description for purposes of student monitoring. Airasian and Abrams (2003) reveal that, before evaluating students’ performance in their daily cognitive tasks, there is a kind of previous learning of students which uses various sources of information so that the teacher can learn about his students. These sources draw on multiple bases and may include comments by previous teachers, comments at the staffroom, official school records, the performance of previous siblings, formal and informal observations in the classroom, records on attitude with scores, and even conversation with the students themselves. This set of perceptions and expectations that teachers form about their students influence the way they set rules, plan instruction, interact with students, interpret and judge the student’s performance.

At the Council meetings we observed, teachers expressed rather openly their convictions about evaluation, thus revealing its relationship with the broader framework of their conceptions about teaching and learning, thus unveiling processes that are more intrinsic in the school. We noticed that, in making judgments on retention or advancement to the next grade, the teachers had difficulty delimiting the object of evaluation, thus prioritizing behavior and participation to the detriment of learning. In this respect, Brookhard (2017) ponders that grading should be based on performance data alone,

which does not mean the teacher should ignore the remainder information he gets about students, such as behavior, participation and effort. But such information is relevant to the teacher's knowledge about his students so that he can organize situations of greater interactions in which he can talk with his students to inspire them.

Feldmann (2019) reaffirms this context and shows that teachers classify their students intuitively, rather than founded on specific training, which results in traditional classification practices and in grades that provide unclear and often misleading information for parents, students and school.

Considering teachers' mistakes as training gaps in evaluation with the resulting strengthening of conceptions that determine teaching practices (Cf. BROWN, 2004, 2008; PAJARES, 1992; THOMPSON, 1992), we observed at Class Council meetings the perverse effects of such context of rare training about students' school life interfering with educational trajectories in a number of ways.

We identified, for example, that in the initial grades of primary education, the teachers, particularly in the stages in which retention was not possible, centered their appreciation on pedagogical issues not free from controversies but focused on students' progress, achievements, difficulties and challenges. On these occasions, they reflected about strategies to avoid retention at the end of cycles, with learning-oriented concerns. However, at meetings for the initial grades in which retention was possible, the belief in the benefits of retention stood out. At one of them, for the 5th grade, the teacher claims that the lack of monitoring by the family is what hinders the development of one of her students, and she recommends:

[It is] better to retain him. [The] boy is at a loss. He missed 66 classes and his grandfather showed up drunk, it's better to retain him and place him in second grade and have monitoring from the fifth grade as he can't do the ba-be-bi-bo-bu. (Melissa⁷, teacher, initial grades of primary education).

At another Council meeting, this time for 3rd grade of primary education, non-cognitive factors prevail in the teacher's appreciation, who presents the following justification for retaining the student:

[...] is a worthless syllabic one, he has no learning problems, however, he's not willing to learn. [...] it's better to retain him, because there's a lot of reading in fourth grade and he won't be able to keep up. (Genoveva, teacher, initial years of primary education).

At many Class Councils, we found varying evaluation objects and criteria, with student behavior and participation as preferred evaluation objects, in addition to a kind of "imaginary scale", particularly in the final grades of primary education, for judging on retention or advancement to the next grade, according to adequacy (or lack thereof) to a desirable discipline profile. On these occasions, there was a tendency to allow students at

7- The names of the teachers are fictitious in order to preserve participants' anonymity.

the extremes of this scale to advance to the next grade, and to retain students placed in the middle of this metric, based on a combination of good behavior and a level of learning that allowed resuming a teaching process in the following year, a recurrent practice based on the teachers' subjective and intuitive perceptions, thus corroborating the thesis of Airasian and Abrams (2003) about the diverse sources that feed teachers' classification of students.

Final considerations

The research we conducted shows us that teacher training on evaluation is necessary, considering the impact of evaluation practices on students' educational and academic trajectory. Mistaken evaluation practices based on subjective elements, without the necessary conceptual and technical foundation, can produce perverse effects on students' educational trajectory, and for this reason we consider that it is urgent to emphasize the aspect of evaluation in both initial and continuing teacher education, as recommended by Randall and Engelhard (2010), who advocate more attention from teacher education programs to matters related to evaluation tasks, considering that many educators, seeing a specific combination of attributes in the student, end up valuing effort and behavior, minimizing the significance of grades and causing conflict between the interested parties.

If behavior and effort are to be part of evaluation, then it is necessary to create a scale for them, thus preserving the student from mistaken judgments that claim they address the cognitive aspect when in fact they emphasize other aspects of development, thus confirming Merle's (2018) thesis about how pedagogically irrelevant teachers' evaluation practices become in the face of such a wide range of factors taken into account in grading. Therefore, we reinforce the need for teacher training on evaluation as a means to overcome mistakes in evaluation actions as regards varying instruments, procedures, criteria and objects.

We do not intend, in this study, to delegitimize the range of information that foments the teacher's classification of his students, but rather to highlight its use and, mainly, the impact this can have with regard to decision making, particularly regarding whether students are retained or advance to the next grade level, so as to prevent impressions or convictions about students from petrifying, thus affecting their academic trajectory, be it in the way teachers see them, or in the way the student sees himself as capable or incapable, depending on the relationship that is established with the teacher.

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