

An analysis of the perception of novice teachers about participation in an induction program



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Abstract

The objective was to analyze the perception of beginning teachers about participation in a mentoring program, seeking to understand the consequences for teaching activity. Eighteen open-ended responses from a mixed questionnaire were analyzed. In the organization and analysis of the data, the following categories were elaborated: initial expectations about the mentoring program; perceptions about the Hybrid Mentoring Program for teaching performance; reflective processes. In general, the analyzes revealed that the program was configured as a favorable scenario for the promotion of the professional development of beginning teachers. The perceptions of the beginners suggest that the dialogued and formative participation, built collaboratively with the mentors, gradually promoted autonomy to think about their pedagogical practices, reflect more critically on their performance, build specific knowledge about the profession, in addition to exercising their self-knowledge, suggesting their recognition and belonging in the profession.

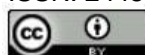
Keywords

teacher professional development; teaching learning; Teacher Induction Program; narratives.

Uma análise sobre a percepção de professoras iniciantes acerca da participação em um programa de indução

Resumo

Objetivou-se analisar a percepção de professoras iniciantes acerca da participação em um programa de mentoria buscando entender quais os desdobramentos para a atividade docente. Foram analisadas 18 respostas abertas de um questionário misto. Na organização e análise dos dados, elaboraram-se as seguintes categorias: expectativas iniciais sobre o programa de mentoria; percepções acerca do Programa Híbrido de Mentoria para a atuação docente; processos reflexivos. De modo geral, as análises revelaram que o programa se configurou como um cenário propício para a promoção do desenvolvimento profissional das professoras iniciantes. As percepções das iniciantes sugerem que a participação dialogada e formativa, construída de forma colaborativa com as mentoras, promoveu, aos poucos, autonomia para pensarem nas suas práticas



pedagógicas, refletirem mais criticamente sobre sua atuação, construir conhecimentos específicos sobre a profissão, além de exercitarem seu autoconhecimento, sugerindo seu reconhecimento e pertencimento na profissão.

Palavras-chave

desenvolvimento profissional docente; aprendizagem da docência; Programa de Indução Docente; narrativas.

Un análisis de la percepción de los docentes noviantes sobre la participación en un Programa de Inducción Docente**Resumen**

El objetivo de este estudio fue analizar la percepción de docentes noviantes sobre su participación en un programa de mentoría buscando las consecuencias para la actividad docente. Se analizaron un total de 18 respuestas abiertas a un cuestionario mixto. En la organización y análisis de los datos, se elaboraron las siguientes categorías: expectativas iniciales sobre el programa de mentoría; percepciones sobre el Programa para la enseñanza; procesos reflexivos. En general, los análisis revelan que el programa se configuró como un escenario propicio para la promoción del desarrollo profesional de los noviantes. Las percepciones de los principiantes sugieren que la participación dialogada y formativa, construida en colaboración con los mentores, promovió gradualmente la autonomía para pensar sobre sus prácticas pedagógicas, reflexionar más críticamente sobre su desempeño, construir conocimientos específicos sobre la profesión, además de ejercitar su autoconocimiento, sugiriendo su reconocimiento y pertenencia a la profesión.

Palabras clave

desarrollo profesional docente; aprendizaje de la enseñanza; Programa de Inducción Docente; narrativas.

1 Introduction

This article aimed to analyze the perception of beginning teachers (PIs) about participation in an induction program, seeking to understand the consequences for teaching activity, through the reading and interpretation of 18 open answers to a mixed questionnaire.

This program, which had the financial support of the São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP), lasted from 2017 to 2020 and aimed to advise teachers in their professional insertion, in order to support them at this stage of their career and help them to act autonomously. For this, she had the support of experienced teachers – called mentors – who, through periodic and contextualized activities, sought to promote training and collaborate with the professional development of beginners.

To achieve the objective initially proposed, we understand that narratives can be fundamental in the investigative process, since they give visibility to conceptions and ideas and can reveal the voices of teachers (Souza, 2014).

The article was divided into four sections. In the Theoretical Contributions, we discuss teacher training and teaching learning; induction and mentoring programs, especially the mentoring program – the scenario of this study; narratives; reflection and reflective processes. In the Methodology, we highlight the research bias and the theoretical-methodological choices, as well as the process of data collection, organization and analysis, presenting the categories built. In the analysis and discussion of the data, we present the records of the responses to the questionnaires, based on the categories elaborated, weaving discussions based on the theoretical principles that underlie this study. In the final Words, we summarized the analyzes and discussions and indicated the revelations and contributions of this work to the area of Teacher Training.

2 Theoretical contributions

Teacher training corresponds to a *continuum*, which is a permanent process that occurs throughout the life of teachers (Tardif, 2002). Likewise, teaching learning is a continuous process that can be related to the different stages of life: the one that precedes initial training; initial training; the beginning of career and professional development (Reali; Tancredi; Mizukami, 2008).

Teaching learning occurs prior to entry into initial training and extends throughout the professional career. Thus, teachers also learn and develop through practice and professional experience, and it is necessary to move the theoretical learning learned in initial training and throughout personal and professional development (Goodson, 2004). In this process, over time, the training needs and demands of teachers - even though they are not the same for each individual - change according to the phases of their careers (Marcelo, 2010).

According to Huberman (2000), career entry corresponds to the first 2-3 years of work and presents a state of "survival" and "discovery". Survival concerns an initial reality shock, the confrontation between the complexity and unpredictability of the profession's situations with the ideals and expectations prior to acting. The discovery, on the other hand,

refers to the initial enthusiasm of feeling part of a professional teaching staff. The states of survival and discovery are usually experienced in parallel, and the state of discovery is the foundation for coping with reality shock – an important factor for teachers to remain in their careers.

Literature has pointed out that the initial years of teaching can represent a phase full of tensions, challenges and learning (Lima, 2006; Papi; Martins, 2010; Príncipe; André, 2019). It is at this moment that the transition from student to teacher occurs and, when he starts his career, he may be faced with a reality totally different from what he expected (Lima, 2006).

Faced with these and several other difficulties, entering the teaching career can be conceived as the most complex phase of learning and professional development, as it involves an important stage of structuring the practice (Papi; Martins, 2010).

[...] seeks to incorporate, understand and integrate more densely into the teaching culture, the school culture and become familiar with the codes and norms of the profession. A decisive time in the teacher's professional history and with decisive repercussions on their future and their relationship with work.

The beginning of teaching is, therefore, a very delicate period. Frustrations caused by a set of challenges can be experienced in loneliness and isolation. This scenario can lead teachers to face deep and painful crises, causing them to rethink their choices and, in more aggravating situations, to even give up the profession (Marcelo, 2010).

Sharing these premises, induction programs are among the alternatives to support beginners and can offer subsidies to face entering the profession in a less traumatic way (Reali *et al.*, 2018). Cruz, Farias, and Hobold (2020, p. 6) highlight, based on studies by Marcelo (1993, 1999), that induction is a time:

[...] the acquisition of knowledge and professional competence by the beginning teacher, who needs systematic actions to monitor the teaching work, either through induction programs, via public policies, or other actions aimed at this purpose.

The concept of induction, however, does not present a unique and congruent meaning among the academic community, but may imply a critical understanding, associated with “[...] issues related to the objective and subjective working conditions experienced by teachers” (Cruz; Farias; Hobold, 2020, p. 6).

For Marcelo (1993, p. 227, our translation), the activities that are developed in the induction programs imply “[...] providing information, advice and supervision to the

beginning teacher [...]”. Cruz, Farias and Hobold (2020) complement that Marcelo's studies denote a range of strategies that focus on the construction of the idea of mentoring.

Mentoring programs – an initiative in which experienced teachers accompany and advise novice teachers –, although they may vary in the emphasis attributed to the diverse and different demands of beginners, aim to work on the autonomy and professional development of teachers (Reali; Tancredi; Mizukami, 2008).

Despite the different approaches they may have, mentoring programs should be based on trust and mutual support between experienced and novice teachers. The mentors' advice should also support socialization in school culture, focusing on situated and contextualized needs (Borges, 2017).

According to Reali, Tancredi and Mizukami (2008, p. 86):

[...] the literature has indicated that mentors should generally be experienced teachers, veterans in the daily experiences of the classroom and school subjects, who can help beginning teachers to learn philosophy, cultural values and establish a repertoire of professional behaviors expected by the school community in which they work.

It is important to emphasize, however, that simply being an experienced teacher is not enough to be a mentor. Mentoring is a complex process that requires time, training and constant improvement of skills and learning (Moir *et al.*, 2009). Although some studies suggest that specific training is not always required to perform the role of a mentor, assuming that experience alone is sufficient (Marcelo & Vaillant, 2017), in this study, we consider that an experienced teacher does not necessarily become a good mentor. It is necessary to go through a specific training process for mentoring (Borges, 2017).

In mentoring, while experienced teachers (mentors) help beginners deal with the challenges and difficulties specific to this phase of their career, they also train and develop as trainers (Marcelo, 1999). Therefore, while developing their practices in the mentoring processes, they can also train, research, test, etc. This process benefits the development of both novice and experienced teachers (Moir *et al.*, 2009).

Still, for this strategy to be valid and enhance the professional development of teachers, it is important to mention the performance of the training institutions, whether they are schools, universities and/or even in mutual collaboration. These institutions can promote the necessary support to undergraduates, graduates and those who are in the first years of work, through partnership with experienced teachers, providing favorable learning

conditions for their professional practice. In this sense, through a partnership between university and school, the Hybrid Mentoring Program (PHM) of the Federal University of São Carlos (UFSCar), the scenario of this study, offered specific training to experienced teachers so that they could act as mentors to beginning teachers.

Based on a constructive-collaborative framework (Cyrino, 2016; Mizukami, 2003) and a hybrid perspective (combining online and in-person activities; bridging school and university; and linking theory and practice), the program aimed to investigate its limits and contributions to the professional development of both experienced and novice teachers working in various educational levels (Early Childhood Education, early years of Elementary Education, and Adult Education).

The experienced teachers had a specific training of continuous character to become mentors. Such training was prepared by the teachers coordinating the project. The work with the beginners took place virtually and began with digital literacy, in which activities were carried out to habituate them in the virtual environment. Then, the mentors went on to follow up, in which individualized activities were proposed for each IP, based on the training demands evidenced (either at the direct request of the beginners or through the sensitive and experienced look of the mentors).

Regarding the constructive-collaborative framework (Cyrino, 2016; Mizukami, 2003) of the program, assuming this perspective implied the active participation of all members of the group, as well as the appreciation of their knowledge, opinions, objectives and, mainly, assumption of responsibilities, decision-making and results on the work.

In addition, one of the main objectives was to ensure participants' understanding and participation in all phases of the intervention and investigation process, considering that teachers involved in collaborative inquiry processes can have changes in practice and reflexivity, as well as in the construction of learning (Cyrino, 2016; Mizukami, 2003). Therefore, reflection and reflective processes are also prominent and important points in the aforementioned mentoring program.

Rodgers (2002) explains that reflection is a process of creating meaning and building knowledge that occurs through connections between experiences and ideas. This movement between experiences is what enables learning to be continuous. Reflection is a type of thinking that requires a rigorous and disciplined system to occur. It needs to be situated individually and in community. In addition, it is essential that the reflective act is

intertwined with attitudes such as open-mindedness, willingness to learn, responsibility and directivity (Rodgers, 2002).

Schön (1983) contributes to the discussion through the idea of a reflective professional. Some principles elaborated by Schön (1983) are those of “reflection in action”, “reflection on action” and “reflection on reflection in action”. The first refers to the reflective act during practice, articulating the teacher's thoughts in a more routine, spontaneous and natural way. The second means a pause to reflect after the moment of the teaching action, in order to reorganize thoughts and attitudes, with a view to achieving the teaching purposes. Subsequently, reflection on reflection in action may occur, in a more advanced process of meta-analysis on what led to take a certain action at that particular moment of the action.

Given the above, narratives can be powerful instruments in promoting reflective processes and enhancing teacher professional development, because, when narrating, the individual needs to reorganize and re-signify thinking about life history experiences, training and professional practice (Oliveira; Gama, 2014).

In the words of Reali, Tancredi and Mizukami (2010, p. 501): “[...] becoming a reflective teacher through narrative writing involves more than mastering some techniques for building written productions. It involves learning to think reflexively.”

The reflections undertaken from the act of narrating can produce learning about teaching through deeper aspects, because talking about oneself involves feeling, meaning and meaning (Oliveira; Gama, 2014), while “[...] the subject organizes his ideas [*sic*] for the report – whether written or oral – he reconstructs his experience reflexively and, therefore, ends up doing a self-analysis [*sic*] that creates new bases for understanding his own practice” (Cunha, 1997, p. 187). We believe, therefore, that they are an ideal instrument to analyze the participation of beginning teachers in the mentoring program and the implications and consequences of this participation for teaching activity.

3 Methodology

This qualitative research proposes the use of narratives as an instrument for apprehending data, due to the understanding that they are important training and research tools (Souza, 2014).

The formative aspect of the narratives for teachers consists mainly in the possibility of providing reflection on the experience and creativity when making decisions about teaching performance. It can be a process of self-knowledge and transformation of practices. In the scope of the investigation, it makes it possible to research the teachers' thoughts, their experiences and their narrative discourses. Narratives are sources that allow us to know historical and cultural conjunctures of the contexts. They also make it possible to listen to teachers, their concerns, learning and perspectives (Oliveira, 2011).

In view of the above, we based ourselves on a descriptive-interpretative analysis of the narratives of the beginners, in order to pay greater attention to the meanings they attribute to their records and reflections, as well as to the interpretations of the researchers about the senses and subjects (Santos, 2009). We seek to focus on the development and complexity of beginners' participation in the mentoring program and the meanings they give to their learning processes and teacher professional development through this participation. Thus, we assume a representational and interpretative reading of the narratives of the beginners with regard to data analysis.

For data collection, we applied a mixed questionnaire (with open and closed questions) composed of four blocks, with the purpose of investigating several aspects related to the teaching practice that are reflected in the performance of beginning teachers, as well as the influence of the mentoring program on the professional development of these teachers. The teachers were referenced in this study according to their identification number in the questionnaire (automatically generated). We emphasize that the data were collected by signing the Informed Consent Form (ICF) and approving the research project at the university's Ethics Committee (case number: 68415717.8.0000.5504Y).

Eighteen beginning teachers were collaborators in the research, who work in different spheres of education: Early Childhood Education, early years of Elementary School and Youth and Adult Education.

We selected, for the analysis, the open questions related to participation in the mentoring program and the consequences of this participation for the teaching activity, present in block 1. The questionnaire was applied at the end of the second half of 2020, which marks the end of the mentoring activities in the program. Among the answers, we sought to identify similar ideas and/or ideas that stood out for their uniqueness/diversity.

The analysis procedures began with the organization of data from a spreadsheet that was automatically generated by the *software* in which the questionnaire was produced and answered. Thus, the questions and answers were systematized in order to facilitate reading and understanding.

The second step was to start reading the answers to the questionnaire with the intention of outlining the first analyzes and thinking about the paths that would be viable in the construction of the methodology. Based on these first impressions, we chose to highlight the answers/ideas that represented the majority of the respondents, as well as highlight those that were unique/specific.

In the construction of the analytical process, we could see that the answers/ideas dealt with very specific subjects, which became categories of data analysis. In this sense, the categories were created as the subjects emerged from the responses. It is worth mentioning that these analyzes were undertaken in the light of the theoretical framework that supports this study.

4. Results and Discussion

As mentioned, we elaborated, based on the teachers' narratives, the categories of analysis, built through the convergences in the reports, namely: initial expectations about mentoring; perceptions about the PHM for teaching performance; and reflective processes. We emphasize that, despite the separation, the subjects addressed are intertwined and connected, so the categories talk to each other.

4.1 *Initial expectations about the mentoring program*

When considering their initial expectations about the mentoring program and its achievement, the beginners understood that the program was successful in this regard, offering support, welcoming, exchanges with experienced teachers, materials, studies, knowledge, possibilities, overcoming, among others.

Even though a teacher pointed out that, initially, she did not have such high expectations, due to the way the program¹ was offered, she reported that she was surprised to realize that the distance had not hindered her, but rather enhanced her participation, by allowing the activities and readings to be carried out according to her routine. This report reveals one of the contributions of hybrid learning: time management (Vaughan, 2010). We can consider it as a self-regulatory strategy, inserted in a certain personal and professional context, which requires the individual to monitor, control and regulate their cognition, motivation and behavior (Rosário, 2004), within an environment with variants that can influence both studies and the learning of acquired and/or experienced knowledge.

The hybrid environment provides greater flexibility for those involved in the training process to carry out the activities based on their time availability (Vaughan, 2010). Management, however, is a very important part; therefore, it is necessary to be committed to the training itself and pay attention to be able to carry out the proposals.

In addition, the fact that the teacher exceeded her expectations may reveal one of the attitudes of the reflective process proposed by Dewey (1953): open-minded. According to the author, through certain attitudes (such as enthusiasm, objectivity, open-mindedness, responsibility, readiness, curiosity and desire for personal growth), it is possible to have more chances of increasing the level of consciousness and the degree of knowledge of the individual in the process of reflection (Reali; Reyes, 2009; Rodgers, 2002).

Still in the direction of the reflective process, for some teachers, the program exceeded their expectations, as notified by novice teacher 17 (questionnaire, 2020):

The initial expectations were to help and to find answers to many questions, however, as we discussed, reflected and learned from the experiences, I realized that it was not answers I needed, because, for many situations, we do not have answers, but the change of look. [...] The program helped me in the sense of self-reflection and to become more critical of things, in the way I act, plan, experience everyday school life.

Teacher 17 reported that she sought answers to her many questions that arose in everyday school life. This suggests that the beginner was looking for ready-made solutions to situations in an environment that is often permeated by unexpected, contextualized situations (Marcelo, 2009). In his account, he gives clues that, by participating in the

¹ As mentioned, the program developed training activities in a hybrid way (face-to-face and *online*) with the mentors and the advice to the beginners took place virtually.

program, it was possible to change this applicationist and technical conception of teaching to a vision that values reflection and learning through experience.

This shift appears to be related to Schön's (1992) ideas about the reflective practitioner. In this sense, it should be considered that teachers do not work in an environment that can be controlled, such as a laboratory, for example. On the contrary, the school, more specifically the classroom, is an environment prone to unforeseen events, as well as the activity of teaching, which requires the teacher to reflect on and about the action.

4.2 Perceptions about PHM for teaching practice

According to the novice teachers, the program was configured as a support network, of sharing, by offering support in the face of the difficulties encountered by each one in this beginning of teaching (such as loneliness, doubts, anxieties, uncertainties, among others). In the words of one of them:

Before participating in the program, I did not know the best way forward to do what was best for the students. With the program, I found the necessary support to face the challenges of the beginning teacher, I had the primordial guidance of my mentor, who put me in contact with texts and videos that made me reflect and learn about the ways and strategies to overcome these challenges at the beginning of my career (Teacher 25, questionnaire, 2020).

As the program is a support network in the face of difficulties, challenges, confrontations, that is, the “reality shock” (Huberman, 2000), when faced with the context in which they find themselves, the beginning teachers received the support and, at the same time, the sharing of experiences, knowledge, ideas, perspectives and pedagogical guidelines of the mentors.

The IPs revealed the search for continuing education and the effort to improve certain practices and postures as points of great prominence in the interest in participating in the program. Thus, they valued their decision about this participation, when expressing some of the perceived contributions, as an aid in improving communication, writing, reflective processes, among others. One of the professors highlighted:

The program helped me understand who I am as a teacher, helped me understand my students and their difficulties, how to solve problems in the classroom: both in relation to literacy difficulties and students' interpersonal relationships. This program gave me tools and guidance on how to act in the face of difficulties, to

perceive my deficiencies as a teacher and to seek training for my qualification (Teacher 12, questionnaire, 2020).

The narratives indicated impacts that possibly go beyond the program. The teachers' reports showed strategies, actions, and guidance from the mentors, which proved to be important to deal with the difficulties/impasses experienced. Although this report does not accurately reveal the repercussions of PHM's actions on the teaching practice of beginners, it gives indications that such support, at the beginning of their careers, can be productive. This indicates the need for further research.

Regarding the work of the mentors, we can draw a parallel with Orland-Barak (2007), when considering that one of the skills necessary for the mentor's action is to offer advice to the beginner, both in the conception and in the implementation and evaluation of teaching proposals that are relevant to the context and process of professional self-evolution. Thus, the narratives of the beginners seem to have revealed that the mentors have certain competencies/characteristics essential to the mentoring work.

The program also seems to have been an "ally" in the fight against loneliness that so many teachers have reported. The following excerpt demonstrates the anguish of a beginner:

I was in a very bad network, in every way. As a beginning teacher, I felt very abandoned and lonely in my performance. I did not have an active pedagogical coordinator, and the program welcomed me and gave me security as I listened and welcomed my demands (Beginning teacher 63, questionnaire, 2020).

Isolation seems to be characteristic of the teaching profession. According to Marcelo and Vaillant (2009), teachers face the task of teaching alone and the classroom can be considered as their sanctuary, in which, routinely, only students witness their performance. Isolation can also be enhanced by the conjuncture of school architecture, the mode of organization (of time and space) and the norms of autonomy and privacy existing among teachers (Marcelo; Vaillant, 2009).

Thus, through welcoming, sharing, and exchanges, the program helped in coping with loneliness and served as "[...] a learning space" (Teacher 50, questionnaire, 2020) for beginners, providing, above all, several moments of reflection and resignification:

The program is very important for my teacher training, as it helps me in the formation of my professional identity in Early Childhood Education, providing moments of reflection in the face of challenges. A place where I can express my

anxieties and know that I will have the support to find the solution to face them. It is also an environment of exchange, learning, training and interaction in search of professional and personal development (Teacher 25, questionnaire, 2020).

The reflective process of teacher 25 about her participation in the program was permeated by the anxieties and challenges of the profession. In the program, he was able to find a space with professionals who enabled less rocky walks and more oriented to his pedagogical practice. In a fruitful environment for her professional and personal development, the teacher stated that she had assisted her in the formation of her teaching identity.

As the mentoring program had also been a proposal for continuing education, as already mentioned, it was configured as part of the teaching professional development of beginners, influencing the formation and constitution of their professional identities (Marcelo, 2009). It is worth mentioning that, within the scope of professional development, teacher identity is not an immutable phenomenon, but a constitutive process of a historically situated subject (Iza *et al.*, 2014), that is, it represents a process in permanent transformation. Thus, the beginning teachers dived into waves that could make them give up on reaching their professional challenges. However, with the collaboration of the program, the strokes strengthened and they persisted, revealing significant advances in their professional teaching development.

The beginners demonstrated to notice advances in the development of certain characteristics, such as confidence, security and a feeling of calm and tranquility in the face of the demands of teaching. Despite the numerous challenges that novice teachers faced (and face), they revealed that they felt more optimistic to teach and explained that the program offered tools to deal with the difficulties of the beginning of their teaching career. In the words of the teachers:

[...] my students earned much more, as we became more reflective and planned our activities better. Certainly, this reflects on our students' learning. The look is different, teaching is more targeted and, thus, learning is better (Teacher beginner 17, questionnaire, 2020).

The program contributed in several ways to my performance: in the relationships established with other teachers who were also beginners, as well as with those with more experience. This positively marked aspects of my performance (Beginning teacher 59, questionnaire, 2020).

In the face of the tensions, challenges, anxieties, and insecurities experienced at the beginning of their teaching careers, the role of the mentors was to provide pedagogical and emotional support so that the novice teachers could build confidence and security in their roles. In this sense, we reiterate the importance of mentoring to promote the professional socialization of novice teachers in school culture (Reali *et al.*, 2018).

Mentoring programs, in general, can make the beginning of teaching less turbulent, especially with regard to the feeling of belonging to the profession, feeling part of a professional body, as well as improving relationships with peers at different stages of professional development.

4.3 Reflective processes

Another point that deserves to be highlighted is the contribution of the program to the reflection, or reflective processes, of beginners. Reflection is a structuring concept in teacher training and development (Zeichner, 2008), as it is an important way to build knowledge and direct teachers' practice.

In the reports, we realized how significant the reflective processes were for the beginners, when they highlighted that the mentoring program contributed to their occurrence, mainly through the exchange of information and knowledge about teaching in basic education, as teacher 80 pointed out about the mediation of conflicts in the classroom that brought her many doubts and anxieties, but that could be remedied/minimized after the support received through mentoring.

It is interesting to observe how relevant the reflection on the teaching performance (Schön, 1992) was important to understand the students' learning process and how this could be reflected in their school development. In the words of one teacher:

I can say that the gain I obtained with my students, through the program, was to provide them with pleasant moments of learning, important moments of reflection, discussion about their knowledge and learning and application of these in their daily lives. Also, the satisfaction of knowing that, through the guidance received, my way of working helped students to advance in their reading and writing hypotheses and in their development in general (Beginning teacher 22, questionnaire, 2020).

When reflecting on her practice and during its occurrence, teacher 22 also approached one of the concepts defined by Schön (1992): reflection on action. As its name

suggests, this reflection occurs after practice (through distancing) and consists of the movement of mentally reworking its pedagogical action, giving it a new structure and transforming it into new knowledge.

Still regarding the reflective process, IPs reported improvements in class management and situations related to being a teacher, apparently with the help of mentoring, when reflecting and reframing their practices. The main mentions in relation to class management are related to: dealing with students' behavior and indiscipline; teaching children with learning difficulties; unexpected situations; dealing with parents.

Considering what we have highlighted so far, we highlight the following report, as the critical reflection of IP 17 (questionnaire, 2020) is of great appreciation, when reflecting on itself and its performance, giving indications that the program was a space that allowed it to emerge the most empathetic knowledge about its limitations:

Today I realize that having anxieties is natural for those who are committed to teaching and try to do their best. Critical reflection of our work is essential to improve our practice; we must always change and ask for help, walk together. After the program, I find myself much more empathetic towards my own limitations and those of my colleagues in the profession.

This teacher's statement is quite expressive. She reveals a fundamental critical-reflective process that was exercised in the course of her pedagogical practices and also together with her mentor. Understanding their own limitations is a complex self-reflective work that is up to the teacher to understand their actions (Schön, 1992), constantly directing and modifying their competencies, behaviors, emotions, feelings, in favor of their proactive teacher development, in order to achieve professional goals and objectives.

The relevance of the commitment to the profession and, therefore, to its professional development directly infers in the construction of its teaching identity, its trademark that shows its uniqueness, its protagonism, which affects, in some way, the human formation of its students. For novice teachers, this involves refining their teaching professionalism, outlining their competencies and skills, and building their values, beliefs, knowledge, and work procedures throughout their professional journey, experiencing situations that "[...] shape the ways they perceive themselves as teachers and act in the profession" (Ambrosetti & Almeida, 2009, p. 606).

5 Final Considerations

The beginning of teaching can be extremely challenging for beginners in teaching (Papi; Martins, 2010; Príncipe; André, 2019). This beginning is often permeated by a mix of emotions, insecurities, and frustrations, as well as joys and learnings. In this context, the PHM, based on the analysis and interpretation of the data, proved to be an important support for beginning teachers by providing a “safer” passage, seeming to allow a fertile ground for teaching learning.

Regarding the initial expectations about the program, the beginning teachers demonstrated that they had good expectations for their professional development and learning construction. It was also possible to perceive evidence of changes in conceptions about teaching as an occasion for the application of theory, for a more reflective and contextualized view.

One of the objectives of the program was to promote skills such as autonomy and self-confidence in beginners in the face of teaching situations. Thus, in certain excerpts, the IPs highlighted the pedagogical and emotional support offered by the mentors. These narratives suggest a process of building such skills. Reflective processes were an intrinsic factor that exercised the cultivation of a more human formation for beginning teachers. The daily situations of the classroom, the challenges, the anxieties, the fears, the conflicts of the beginning of the career were – each one – receiving support and guidance from mentor teachers.

The perceptions of the beginners indicate that the dialogued and formative participation, built collaboratively with the mentors, opened the door to more critical reflective processes about their performance, in addition to exercising their self-knowledge.

Therefore, we consider that induction programs are necessary with regard to the training of teachers working at the most varied levels and modalities of teaching, but, in particular, teachers working in basic education. We argue that the discussion of this topic should be expanded and widely dialogued with the educational community, especially in relation to the implementation of proposals such as the PHM, the scenario of this study, in the areas of initial and continuing education.

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