

IDENTITY PROCESSES OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS: FORMATION SPACE AND TIME

PROCESSOS IDENTITÁRIOS DE DOCENTES UNIVERSITÁRIOS: ESPAÇO E TEMPO DA FORMAÇÃO

PROCESOS DE IDENTIDAD DE PROFESORES UNIVERSITARIOS: ESPACIO Y TIEMPO DE FORMACIÓN

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ABSTRACT: The globalized world causes changes of contexts and behaviors which generate demands and reflect on the role that the university professor has within a social space, which is the cultural university. Being part of this social group requires continuous formation, constituting new identities and driving of an idea: the teacher must adapt to the role of teaching and education in today's world. The objective was to understand the path of formation of university teachers and the implications on the construction of teacher identity. To address the goals the choice was the qualitative research using the (auto)biographical approach. The (auto)biographical approach has been, over the course of three decades, built in the context of adult education and a procedure called “life history in formation”, where its dynamics and inspiration are based mainly on the works by Marie-Christine Josso (2004; 2010). Four life stories of university teachers belonging to the teaching staff of the State University Vale do Acaraú, in Sobral - Ce, were narrated. The analysis of the narratives was in accordance with the collection steps proposed by Josso (2004; 2010), and we could see that researching the formation processes of these university teachers, based on listening to their life stories, allowed us to feel the fragility, plurality and mobility of identities built throughout the life of each teacher.

KEYWORDS: Higher teaching. Teaching identity. Life stories. (Auto)biographical approach.

RESUMO: *O mundo globalizado provoca mudanças de contextos e condutas, as quais geram exigências e refletem no papel que o professor universitário exerce dentro de um espaço social, cultural que é a universidade. Fazer parte desse grupo social exige uma formação contínua, constitutiva de novas identidades e propulsora de uma ideia: o professor precisa adequar-se à função de ensinar e educar no mundo atual. O objetivo dessa pesquisa foi compreender no percurso de formação de professores universitários implicações sobre a construção da identidade docente. Para contemplar os objetivos a escolha foi pela pesquisa qualitativa, utilizando a abordagem (auto)biográfica. A abordagem (auto)biográfica vem sendo, ao longo de três décadas, construída no contexto da formação de adultos e de um procedimento denominado de “história de vida em formação”, onde sua dinâmica e inspiração encontram-se fundamentadas, principalmente, nos trabalhos de Marie-Christine Josso (2004; 2010). Foram narradas quatro histórias de vida de professoras universitárias pertencentes ao quadro*

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docente da Universidade Estadual Vale do Acaraú, em Sobral - Ce. A análise das narrativas foi de acordo com as etapas da coleta propostas por Josso (2004; 2010), e pudemos perceber que pesquisar sobre os processos de formação dessas professoras universitárias, a partir da escuta de suas histórias de vida, permitiu-nos sentir a fragilidade, a pluralidade e a mobilidade das identidades construídas ao longo da vida de cada professora.

PALAVRAS-CHAVES: *Docência superior. Identidade docente. Histórias de vida. Abordagem (auto) biográfica.*

RESUMEN: *El mundo globalizado provoca cambios en los contextos y comportamientos que generan demandas y reflexionan sobre el papel que desempeña el profesor universitario en un espacio social y cultural que es la universidad. Ser parte de este grupo social requiere una formación continua, constituir nuevas identidades y propulsar una idea: el maestro necesita adaptarse a la función de enseñar y educar en el mundo de hoy. El objetivo de esta investigación fue comprender en el curso de la formación de docentes universitarios, las implicaciones en la construcción de la identidad docente. Para contemplar los objetivos, la elección se realizó mediante investigación cualitativa, utilizando el enfoque biográfico (auto). El enfoque (auto) biográfico se ha desarrollado a lo largo de tres décadas en el contexto de la educación de adultos y un procedimiento llamado "historia de la vida en formación", donde su dinámica e inspiración se basan principalmente en el trabajo de Marie. Christine Josso (2004; 2010). Se narraron cuatro historias de vida de profesores universitarios pertenecientes al personal docente de la Universidad Estatal Vale do Acaraú en Sobral-Ce. El análisis de las narrativas se realizó de acuerdo con las etapas de recopilación propuestas por Josso (2004; 2010) y nos dimos cuenta de que investigar los procesos de formación de estos profesores universitarios, al escuchar sus historias de vida, nos permitió sentir la fragilidad, la pluralidad y movilidad de las identidades construídas a lo largo de la vida de cada maestro.*

PALAVRAS CLAVE: *Enseñanza superior. Identidad docente. Historias de vida. Enfoque (auto) biográfica.*

Introduction

The globalized world causes changes in contexts and behaviors, which generate demands and reflect on the role that the university professor plays within a social, cultural space that is the university. Being part of this professional group brings demands in relation to investment in formation, which can constitute new identities and propel an idea: the teacher needs to adapt to the function of teaching and educating in today's world.

Within this perspective, we understand that the 21st century is the scene of countless transformations in the economic, social, political field, and education is not left out of these discussions and demands of this market. It is possible to see such requirements in the growing number of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), which charge their teachers for qualifications and constant formation (PASSOS, 2009). In many situations, this search for formation

generates feelings that, directly or indirectly, can affect teaching practice. What is perceived is that some university professors enter teaching, sometimes without the didactic-pedagogical formation necessary for teaching and, thus, enter the classroom believing that having a specialty or having been a student for many years enables them to be teachers. This entry into the academic environment is sometimes a market demand, causing gaps in teacher performance and can compromise the organization of his classes. The author Pimenta (2010) expressed her concern with this reality of the university professor, when she wrote that the many behaviors chosen and adopted by university professors stem from their experiences as students, whether in the scope of basic or higher education. Tardif (2002) corroborates the idea by saying that the act of teaching is full of influences received from the various experiences lived during the teacher formation. The pedagogical actions of teachers are sometimes isolated and lonely, receiving no formation in the field of teaching, as Pimenta puts it (2010).

Continuing the thought of Pimenta (2010), we expand our discussions, pointing out that, in the daily practice of university professors, as already mentioned above, individualized actions are noticeable, based on the view that teachers receive their discipline programs and with them they are outlining the organization of their disciplines, choosing their methodologies and assessment methods, all without proper guidance and pedagogical organization, and for that reason they end up in choices molded from the experiences lived as students. It is a fact that the teacher learns from the practice of his masters and, sometimes, they reproduce them in the classroom, since any action that produces satisfaction will tend to be repeated and learned.

Based on this problem, marked by subjectivities, motivated by daily challenges imposed by the most diverse fields of personal life, the student's relation with the teacher, in the execution of administrative tasks, we present our understanding of how a university professor finds himself, in the face of so many adversities of the world, and he perceives himself as a teacher, thus seeking his identity.

The identity of the university professor

Identity is neither immutable nor external, which can be inherited or acquired. It is understood, historically, as a process under construction in a person's life. For Moita (2000), identity is the result of complex relations between the self and the other, between the social and the personal.

Moita's opinion is ratified by Dubar (2005, p. 135), when the author comments that “the identity for oneself and for the other are at the same time inseparable - I never know who I am

except in the eyes of the other - and connected in a problematic way - the experience of the other is never directly lived by the self”³. It is salutary to read the writings of Dubar (2005), as the author appropriates pertinent and in-depth thoughts about identity when he says that we can never be sure of our identity, as it is seen as something to be built and, sometimes, rebuilt, whenever there is uncertainty.

This relation of the self with the other personifies the concept of identity, which is built from the processes of formation. And formation can be conceptualized, in addition to a learning activity located in times, limited and precise spaces, as well as a vital action of self-construction. Formation involves the ability to understand how each person was formed, through the pluralities of life. To form is to exchange experiences, to interact socially, to always learn from relations, because nobody is formed in a vacuum (MOITA, 2000). The narratives of the life stories of university professors point to a singularity of each story, influencing the way of acting, reacting and interacting with each one.

Within this thought of professional identity, Pimenta (1996) argues that the teaching profession is something that goes hand in hand with the needs of social reality and that the current world demands from this professional change, qualification, that is, several demands that can, directly or indirectly, influence the identity of the teacher. A professional identity is built from the social significance of the profession, from the review of traditions and social meanings of the profession. Moita (2000) validated this thought when he wrote that the process of building a professional identity is not apart from the social function, the culture of the professional group and the socio-political context, it is strengthened from the meaning that each teacher, as actor or author, he confers on the teaching activity in his daily life, based on his values, the way of acting in the world, his life story, his anxieties, desires and knowledge. Thus, Menezes (2011) believes that the meanings we give to social processes are preponderant factors for the construction of our professional identity.

In the reality of the university teacher, Pimenta (2010) emphasizes that the identity is being built, influenced by the doing and knowledge of the daily relations between teaching, research and extension, consistent with the reality of the teacher who needs to be reflective, critical, competent in within your discipline. Libâneo (2012) reinforces and suggests that it is necessary for the teacher to have mastery of the content of the subject, methodological appropriation, knowledge of the sociocultural reality of the students and be knowledgeable of the sociocultural, institutional practices in which the students are involved so that it can act

³ “a identidade para si e para o outro são ao mesmo tempo inseparáveis - nunca sei quem sou a não ser no olhar do outro - e ligados de maneira problemática - a experiência do outro nunca é vivida diretamente pelo eu”

even in the aspects of motivation. Everything contributes to the desire to educate, because education is a process of humanization. It calls for human beings capable of creating and offering responses to challenges and different social and political contexts.

Professional knowledge has a temporal dimension, that is, the teacher's life story and its construction throughout his career, the knowledge acquired through the formative experiences lived in the most different formation spaces; the family, the school, all of these events are recorded in the teacher's memory, who will be able to remember something that was remarkable to him during the time of the school of life. When evoking events, it is possible to remember a fifth-grade teacher, a personal injustice experienced in preschool or the endless mathematical equations. Tardif presents that “a sequence of life experiences cannot be reversed. There is no logical operation that goes back to the starting point with which everything starts again”⁴ (2002, p. 67). The teacher, having a temporal awareness, favors his historicity by defining everyday life, giving meaning and direction to his own life trajectory.

Reinforcing the thinking of Tardif (2000), when the author reports that professional knowledge is temporal, that is, it is acquired through time, and that part of the teachers' knowledge is considered the fruits of the time that the teachers were immersed in their school life and that this period, of approximately sixteen years, will be manifested through the baggage of knowledge, beliefs, representations and certainties about teaching practice. These experiences can influence the way in which each teacher exercises his profession.

Each teacher goes through formation moments, throughout his professional career, which we can call cycles; in this line of thought we bring Huberman (1992), commenting on the life cycle of teachers, considering it as sequences which may not necessarily be lived in the same order or that professions go through the same phases. The first phase is understood as the entry into the career, which covers the first three years of teaching, perceptible to the professional because it represents the initial contact with the complex function of being a teacher: concern with you and the students, distance between the real and the ideal classroom, pedagogical issues, difficulties with students and teaching material, etc. The second phase, called stabilization, can be seen as a moment of subjective choice of a professional identity that implies renouncing, at least for a certain period, other identities. Then, the third phase of diversification, which is initially characterized by motivational and dynamic actions, which later become routine. If the teacher declines individualized actions, without instigating the protagonism of his students, there is a moment of disenchantment, a feeling present in many

⁴ “uma sequência de experiências de vida não pode ser invertida. Não há operação lógica que se volte ao ponto de partida com que tudo recomece”

teachers, resulting from the failure in their experiences, inducing them to the most diverse questions about professional life. This period commonly occurs around the age of thirty-five to forty years of age, or between the fifteenth and twenty-fifth year of teaching, where the teacher asks himself what he did with his life, evaluating whether the objectives and goals outlined were reached. Finally, the fourth phase appears, marked by serenity, security and perceived distance among teachers aged forty-five and fifty-five years, that is, with more than 30 years of teaching. This time highlights the relations of this professor with his students, co-workers and even with his functions held in senior positions. At the time when serenity appears, the distance is visible, with a difficult emotional dialogue between students and teachers, perhaps due to differences in age, culture, etc. In empirical studies by Huberman (1992), we saw that the feelings presented in the description of the phases of the teachers' life cycle, stem from social factors such as: working conditions, monotony in the classroom, political and family events.

In Brazil, about two decades ago, there were several discussions about the activities of university professors. What was discussed was the development of their own competencies that would generate professionalism and overcome thoughts about teaching at the university in this activity, not only to supplement wages or to fill idle time. In Masetto's studies (2009), we found three competencies necessary for the development of teaching in higher education. The first competence tells us about the teacher having mastery of basic knowledge in a specific area and professional experience in the field, requiring updated professional knowledge and practices acquired from participation in congresses, capacitation courses, specializations, etc. The second competence is about the teacher having mastery in the pedagogical area, since in the vast majority of teachers the concern with pedagogical actions is devalued, that is, they point out such activities as something superfluous or unnecessary for their teaching activity. What is understood is that the teacher needs to be clear about what his student wants and needs to learn, relating to the basic principles of learning, how to learn meaningfully, effectively and with greater fixation; to know the current theories about learning in higher education, which go through the formation of adult people aiming at the cognitive, affective-emotional development, of skills and formation of attitudes; being a curriculum manager, this attribution reflects the sensitivity that the teacher must have about the integrality of his subjects with the others existing in the curriculum of his students, generating a multidisciplinary and communicative work with colleagues and with people outside the university environment, and have mastery of educational technology. The third competence shows that the teacher must work on his political dimension: when he enters the classroom, he is still a citizen, someone who is part of a people, of a nation. Someone who has a vision of man, world, society, culture and education. Santos (2001)

confirms that the university professor to perform his function must know the content of his specialty, have a vision of education, of the world, of man and have pedagogical knowledge.

Life narratives constructing teachers' identity paths

In the field of research in Education, we observe an increasing number of researchers using the (auto) biographical approach in the development of studies in the line of teacher formation. However, investigating life stories generates, among the participants, an immersion in their feelings, giving meaning and meaning to each narrated fact, breaking barriers and opening events between the past and the present. In this perspective, Josso (2004) states that the (auto) biographical approach identifies teaching identity trajectories working with the subjects' logic as “living stones”, since the story is woven from experiences, where the subject introduces the texture and the senses of its action.

The choice of the (auto) biographical approach as a condition for thinking about the formation of university teachers is based on simple questions, among which we highlight: the possibility of the researcher to explore the process of self-education in daily life; explore individuality from the narratives, identify the ways of constitution of identity, from the experiences and knowledge involved in the practices of teachers working in higher education. The choice was made not only because it is a current methodological procedure, but because it answers the concerns of this object of research and because it is able to infer from the life of the subject who reconstructs himself and gives meaning to his experiences as university professors. Thinking about life mobilizes reflections of inner processes of what we experience during our trajectory, and Josso (2004) reinforces that memories, when they are remembered, provoke several emotions that can invigorate and strengthen everything that was lived and that can now become a formative experience.

The development of the study required the researcher a previous time destined to know the universe to be researched. For this, conversations were scheduled with the course coordinators, consulting the names of teachers, formation, teaching time. Visits were made to the centers, until finally reaching the four teachers. The quantitative “four” is justified because it is a research that uses a method that requires researcher involvement, listening, data interpretation, return to the interviewee to reconstruct the narratives, demanding time and dedication to guarantee the reliability of the data collected in the narratives .

The choice of four women and university teachers was random and inductive, perhaps because the essence of the method involves subjectivity and the fact that they are all women

has generated a more welcoming environment and proximity to realities. The chosen teachers had different formation, both at undergraduate and at graduate levels: the courses of the teachers were Physical Education (Full Teaching Degree), Law (Bachelor), Pedagogy (Teaching Degree) and History (Full Teaching Degree); as for the level of qualification, they were a specialist, a master and two doctors. For all teachers, fictitious identifications were associated (Caetana, Elis Regina, Alcione and Iracema). As for teaching, it was between ten and seventeen years of university teaching.

For this research, the methodological trajectory suggested by Josso (2004) consists of the following phases: phase of introduction to the construction of the narrative of the history of formation; stage of narrative elaboration; phase of understanding and interpretation of written narratives; assessment phase of educators and participants. The first phase was marked by the “introduction to the construction of the narrative of formation”, through the generation of a starting question aiming to be a guiding thread for all narrative reflection. It was asked: how did the identity of the university professor develop and what in this trajectory can be taken as a formative experience? There were individualized meetings in an appropriate place, with times and days chosen by the teachers. It is worth mentioning that participation in the research took place freely and with the consent of each teacher, where before each interview they were given a Free and Informed Consent Term that contained the objectives of the study, the possibility for each one to give up the research at any time.

All interviews were recorded. The first interview was with "Elis Regina", the second interview was with "Alcione", the third was with "Caetana", the last was with "Iracema". The second phase was the “elaboration of the narrative” conducted by transcribing the narratives. For that moment, all the narratives were transcribed and sent to each teacher by e-mail, with the purpose of re-reading them, allowing them to indicate the exclusion or inclusion of facts. The written text makes subjectivity, previously presented in speech, as something objective. Something that requires determination, because life narratives require a whole process of reflection on what will be said, written and interpreted by university professors and the researcher.

The third phase of “understanding and interpreting written narratives” was made by three moments, the first consisted of a re-reading of the transcribed narratives, followed by the reflections/impressions felt after this re-reading being narrated orally, followed by the conduction of an elaborated verbal question from the research objective. During this collective meeting, the narratives were interpreted and several questions were asked by the teachers as each one revealed their stories.

The richness of the experience was listening and reflecting on each story with the statements presented. During the meeting, each teacher presented her narratives in a paused reading, expressing to the group a reflection on her formative trajectory. In each narrative it was possible to isolate the different experiences in the stories told, but also, similarities as the way of acting in the face of situations occurred in professional practices. For the group of teachers, it was considered difficult because it required a commitment to look at oneself no more than before, since it was not healthy to change the narrative without a pause to rework the narrative itself, in order to rewrite its own trajectory.

The fourth phase addressed the balance of the educators of the participants, marked by the interpretation and analysis of the information collected. The knowledge of part of the life history of university teachers allowed us to understand the subjectivity of each moment of the formation that marked it, and that is now taken as a formative experience.

After each phase of listening, transcription, collective meeting and rewriting of the narrative, it was time for the research where we will present the understanding of the subjectivity present in the formation of teachers. The experience of listening to each story was also instructive for the teachers and for the researcher, as there were moments when we immersed ourselves in our subjectivities, we identified the similarities between our histories of life experiences and we pointed out the forming experiences. Among the reports below, we highlight some considered more relevant.

- The experience of telling one's own story as a learning process of understanding and the certainty of being on the right path of experience as a university professor;
- Satisfaction and accomplishment of the path taken by their undergraduate students;
- It is possible to perceive the trajectory of the graduation at the same time that it facilitates the systematization of knowledge, which makes it advance in research and in the institutionalization of knowledge;
- Understanding the trajectory as the liberation from all feeling that imprisoned and tied the established rules;
- Formation does not take place within the university, but it is a process built up through experiences, contact with people and outside learning.

Below are moments narrated by the teachers:

[...] formation goes through several stages. I see my formation in graduation, since choosing a profession in youth is always a challenge whether it will work

or not. But I wanted to do history and I knew that the field was as much about research as about being a teacher. And during the course it was really of formation. Learning what it is to teach, even in dialogue, as my formation was a bachelor's and a teaching degree, the emphasis on teaching was very great. Submit papers, go to a volunteer course. This has completely transformed me, in the sense of saying that this is the way. I chose right. Within the question and if the question is singular, my formation takes place at graduation. I found myself as a human being, a teacher. With the desire to want to go for a walk and be sure that I chose the right profession, as it is always a challenge for a young person [...]. (Iracema).⁵

[...] my experience became official at graduation. It comes from experience with social movements, from work, with family formation, in social organizations. I went on this search trying to adapt this formation outside the academy space, trying to reconcile this time at the academy. Of course, the academy makes possible a systematization of this knowledge, reorganizing, advancing, but a lot of my formative process of understanding the world, of trying to understand more this dynamic of social life, happened much less at the university and much more outside the university [...]. (Caetana).⁶

Upon hearing these reports, I was able to dive into experiences that I also did and do in this university space, which was quickly and unexpectedly accessed by listening to the other. Some of the feelings identified at the beginning of the teaching career seem common to all who choose the teaching profession. Graduation formation almost always does not prepare us for real challenges in pedagogical practice. The life stories presented here narrated about the academic path, the pedagogical formation, the university space and the social role of the higher institution of university professors with a teaching and a bachelor's degree. We will see below what provided the teaching profession to this group of teachers:

[...] my formation is totally different. Perhaps a little closer to Elis Regina in the sense of being a bachelor, we are not formed to be a teacher, although being part of the humanities area, my formation is different from that of teachers. I come from a school that we did not receive formation to be a teacher, but a part of us likes it and has it as a professionally achieved status.

⁵ [...] formação passa por várias etapas. Vejo a minha formação na graduação, desde a escolha da profissão na juventude é sempre um desafio se vai dar certo ou não. Mas, eu, queria fazer História e sabia que o ramo era tanto de pesquisa como de ser professora. E durante o curso foi realmente de formação. Aprender o que é ensinar, mesmo no diálogo, como minha formação foi bacharelado e licenciatura, a ênfase na docência foi muito grande. Apresentar trabalhos, ir para um curso voluntário. Isso me transformou completamente, no sentido de dizer que é esse o caminho. Escolhi certo. Dentro da pergunta e se a pergunta for no singular a minha formação se dá na graduação. Me encontrei como ser humano, docente. Com o desejo de querer ir caminhando e ter a certeza de que escolhi a profissão correta, pois é sempre um desafio para um jovem [...]. (Iracema).

⁶ [...] a minha experiência se oficializou na graduação. Advinda da experiência com os movimentos sociais, do trabalho, com a formação familiar, nas organizações sociais. Fui nessa busca tentando adequar essa formação fora do espaço da academia, tentando conciliar esse tempo da academia. Claro que a academia vai possibilitando uma sistemática desses saberes, reorganizando, avançar, mas muita coisa do meu processo formativo de compreensão do mundo, de tentar compreender mais essa dinâmica da vida social, se deu bem menos na universidade e bem mais fora da universidade [...]. (Caetana).

What experience of your narrative can be taken as a formative and transforming experience? There is a lot in my narrative that I see as a harbinger of everything that was going to happen and happened in my personal and professional life. But there is a side to a situation that was not an easy decision, and that it never is, it was when I had to leave my office and choose the teaching profession and stay with the higher education teaching profession [...] (Alcione).⁷

We are the result of the interaction of different experiences, in short, “we are not born teachers, we become”, an experience caught in doing and now perceived in the report of these trajectories lived and carried by a baggage to be added with the new knowledge. Thus, the life trajectory can be homogenized with the space of the academy. The university professor will, over time, adapt to her reality and improve his posture, language and expression. And this model can be copied, as a reflection of an experience. Inspired by this, we welcome the following experience:

[...] but, because I chose, I think that reading the text made me think that, being a teacher, because I always played as a teacher, my dolls were my students. The pleasure of school has always been very intense, teaching classmates, going to the board, doing math tasks, I have always been good at math. I started to understand. As the teachers spoke ill of salary, that it was not a good profession, until high school I did not want to be a teacher, since since I was going to study a lot I wanted to succeed in my career and did not want a "meager career". I went to the course to do law or administration, that's when I had three brilliant history teachers, I said that's what I wanted to be. It was the teachers who spoke and made me choose the profession, just as many others had not awakened me, but I also had this little ant. Everything enchants me a lot, even today. [...] When I try to understand why my identity is to be a teacher, I think there is a relation with the experiences that Caetana is provoking on me, I would say that as this relation of life, of experience, of being in the world, it is a little in that sense. (Iracema)⁸

⁷ [...] a minha formação é totalmente diferente. Talvez um pouco mais próximo da Elis Regina no sentido de ser bacharel, não somos formadas para ser professora, embora faça parte da área de humanas, minha formação é diferente das professoras. Eu venho de uma escola de que não recebemos formação para ser professora, mas uma parte de nós gosta e tem isso como um status conquistado profissionalmente. Que experiência da sua narrativa pode ser tomada como experiência formadora e transformadora? Tem muita coisa na minha narrativa que vejo como um prenúncio de tudo que ia acontecer e aconteceu na minha vida pessoal e profissional. Mas tem um lado de uma situação que não foi uma decisão fácil, e que nunca é, foi quando tive que sair do meu escritório e escolher o magistério e ficar com o magistério superior [...] (Alcione).

⁸ [...] mas, porque escolhi, acho que a leitura do texto me fez pensar isso, ser professora, porque sempre brinquei de professora, a minhas bonecas eram minhas alunas. O prazer da escola sempre foi muito intenso, ensinar os colegas, ir para o quadro, fazer as tarefas de matemática, sempre fui boa em matemática. Fui começando a entender. Como os professores falavam mal do salário, que não era uma profissão boa, até o ensino médio não queria ser professora, pois já que iria estudar muito queria ter sucesso na carreira e não queria uma carreirinha. Fui para o cursinho para fazer direito ou administração, foi quando tive três professoras de história brilhantes, disse que era isso que queria ser. Foram os professores que se manifestaram e que me fez escolher a profissão, assim como muitos outros não me tinham despertado, mas eu também tinha essa formiguinha. Tudo me encanta muito, até hoje. [...] Quando busco entender porque a minha identidade é ser professora, acho que exista uma relação com as experiências que a Caetana está me provocando, eu diria que como essa relação de vida, de experiência, de estar no mundo, é um pouco nesse sentido. (Iracema)

Listening to these teachers was pleasant and also a significant experience, as we understood the degree of trust they placed in the researcher and this was able to provide the proximity of each one. I can even identify some moments as striking:

- Proximity between researcher and researched;
- The level of depth of the narratives;
- The ability to identify university teaching identities;
- The diversity and complexity of these identities;
- The path, sometimes marked by lonely, distressing aspects, but also full of discoveries;
- The traces of how the relations between university professor and student are established;
- Difficulties in combining practical knowledge with theory.

The (auto)biographical approach stimulates memory, causes transformation and a reinterpretation of our own history of teaching life, because as we narrate our history we select certain facts, sometimes we narrate what we consider important. Narrating and listening to life stories made the teachers reflect how much we should value the life of each person, because each trajectory has a weight, each person has a life, a style, a condition and an identity. It is worth noting that this approach worked as a therapeutic moment, as it awakened memory, rescued images, feelings, about the lived history that passed through life and memory.

Final considerations

At the end of this study, we consider that the objective, to understand the process of formation and identity formation of university professors through listening to life stories, was achieved. What can be noticed is that each chosen university professor narrated her life story, full of personal details of her social, cultural, psychological and family involvement. With each story narrated, read and socialized, emotion was perceived, a feeling capable of bringing out memories of the past bringing them to the present, only now re-signifying the facts and transforming them into experiences. The most interesting thing to notice was the interface of the stories, a fact visible from the experience reported as an educator, impacting and transforming the life of the narrator and of those who listen to it, since the stories lived by the teachers were sometimes full of intercessions, arising from the proximity of some paths followed in the lives of each of them.

Today, I understand that working with life stories enables us to exercise listening and understanding of a person's life stories, because this exercise of hearing about a life experience allows us to revisit our own history, providing a reconstruction of our identity as a university professor, from the resignification of previously unknown experiences and which, after being crossed with other stories, had an impact on transformative experiences. Thus, talking about a person's life takes us back to human subjectivity, generating in those who study, the need for openness towards others. This listening exercise refines the senses, making one understand what was narrated, and what could not be told because he was able to touch the depth of subjective experiences of intimacy, that is, what was left between the lines and which is only possible understand by the sensitivity of attentive listening and mediated by the understanding we have in our own narrative of life as a teacher.

Finally, we understand that identity to be built requires time and space, time that is not linear, it can be rescued, and space that can alternate events that occurred in the past and that today seem important and formative. Learning to be a university professor does not happen only when we are as teachers. Therefore, being and becoming a teacher goes through formation that develops throughout the schooling process. At a time when teachers, still students of basic education, were already immersed in a teaching culture, when they lived for years with their teachers, each in their own way, mediated by introspective models, they developed their strategies to teach, organize spaces and maintain discipline in the classroom.

Researching the formative processes of these university teachers, based on listening to their life stories, allowed me to feel the fragility, the plurality and the mobility of the identities constructed throughout the life of each teacher.

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