

THE ADVISING PROCESS(ES): REFLECTIONS FROM HISTORICAL AND HYPOTHETICAL CASES

O(S) PROCESSO(S) DE ORIENTAÇÃO: REFLEXÕES A PARTIR DE CASOS HISTÓRICOS E HIPOTÉTICOS

EL (LOS) PROCESO (S) DE ORIENTACIÓN: REFLEXIONES DE CASOS HISTÓRICOS E HIPOTÉTICOS

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ABSTRACT: Teacher education research has incipiently contemplated the relationship between students and advisors, especially regarding advising didactic planning. Likewise, Brazilian law does not specify the advisor's role(s) in different levels of education. In this essay, we reflect on the advising process(es) through historical and hypothetical cases, inspired by real situations, to encourage discussions about this theme. Based on these cases, we highlight advising elements and attitudes, such as inheritance of intellectual capital, influence on the worldview, and ideological divergences. The mentors' experiences influence the advising process(es) more than the educational aspects.

KEYWORDS: Advising. Teacher education. Higher Education.

RESUMO: Pesquisas no campo da formação de professores têm contemplado de forma incipiente as relações entre orientandos e orientadores, principalmente no que concerne ao planejamento didático da orientação. Da mesma forma, a legislação brasileira não especifica qual(is) o(s) papel(is) do orientador nos diferentes níveis de ensino. Neste ensaio, refletimos sobre o(s) processo(s) de orientação por meio de casos históricos e hipotéticos, inspirados em situações reais, de modo a fomentar a ampliação de discussões sobre esta temática. A partir dos casos, evidenciamos elementos e posturas inerentes à orientação, como herança de capital intelectual, influência na visão de mundo e divergências de posturas ideológicas. O processo de orientação é mais influenciado pelas vivências dos orientadores do que por aspectos de caráter educacional.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Orientação. Formação docente. Ensino Superior.

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RESUMEN: *La investigación en el campo de la formación del profesorado ha contemplado incipientemente las relaciones entre estudiantes y orientadores, especialmente en lo que respecta a la planificación didáctica de la orientación. Asimismo, la ley brasileña no especifica cuál es la función del orientador en los diferentes niveles de educación. En este ensayo reflexionamos sobre el (los) proceso (s) de orientación a través de casos históricos e hipotéticos, inspirados en situaciones reales, con el fin de propiciar la expansión de las discusiones sobre este tema. A partir de los casos, destacamos elementos y actitudes inherentes a la orientación, como la herencia del capital intelectual, la influencia en la cosmovisión y las divergencias en las actitudes ideológicas. El proceso de orientación está más influenciado por las experiencias de los mentores que por los aspectos educativos.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Orientación. Formación del profesorado. Enseñanza Superior.*

Introduction

Research on orientation in Brazil is incipient (CORRÊA, 2012) and is, for the most part, focused on the performance of advising teachers of teaching curricular internships (WINCH; TERRAZZAN, 2011). In contrast, the theme is more explored at the international level, mainly addressing relationships between advisors and students and how they influence the formation of teachers and researchers (KNOX *et al.*, 2006; PUNYANUNT-CARTER; WRENCH, 2008; BLOOM *et al.*, 2007), thus, there are gaps regarding the understanding of the advisor-advised relationship in the Brazilian scenario.

Brazilian legislation includes the figure of the advisor in Higher Education in teaching internships in undergraduate teaching courses (BRASIL, 1996; BRASIL 2002a) and in Postgraduate Studies (BRASIL, 2010), also in monographs and professional formation activities in undergraduate course curricular guidelines (FRAUCHES, 2008). However, legislation and public policies do not specify which functions should be performed by advisors, nor do they provide for specific formation to exercise this obligation.

In this essay, we deal with the remarks and attitudes of teachers and students towards the advising process through historical and hypothetical cases (inspired by real situations). We use these scenarios as a backdrop to discuss how the act of advising can be practiced with intent, using pedagogical knowledge (among others), and contributing to the formation of teachers and researchers.

What is discussed about advising?

Research aimed at teacher formation focused on higher education, through the action of “educators of teachers”, has timidly emerged in the 21st century, since basic education is

the main focus of pedagogical research (WINCH; TERRAZZAN, 2011). In this way, there has been evidence, in Brazil, of research on teaching internship guidance, since it is an essential moment for the formation of future teachers, investigating, for example, the relationships between undergraduate students and their teaching internship advisors. However, the process of advising in research and in postgraduate studies has not been given due importance, a fact corroborated by the incipience of Brazilian research with this theme (CORRÊA, 2012), in comparison with the international literature (KNOX *et al.*, 2006; PUNYANUNT-CARTER; WRENCH, 2008; BLOOM *et al.*, 2007; CURTIN; STEWART; OSTROVE, 2013; BARRES, 2013; WOOLSTON, 2015).

As previously mentioned, the role of the advisor in the teaching internship has been discussed by several authors in Brazil, highlighting the research by Daniel (2009), Winch and Terrazzan (2011), Assis and Rosado (2012), Quadros, Duarte and Botelho (2015) and Feldkercher (2016). As an example, Winch and Terrazzan (2011) show previous experiences, reception by a more experienced advisor colleague, or even the motivation to seek readings and conversations with other professionals, as a means of formation for the advisor process in curricular internship subjects. Feldkercher (2016) recognizes the relevance of the role of the advisor and its influence in the formation of future teachers, pointing out that the relationship between advisors and interns should be built on a pedagogical character, considering knowledge sharing, advice, improvement of pedagogical practices and solutions for problems, in an environment permeated by dialogue. In this context, Daniel (2009) points out the importance of bringing advisors (university professors) closer to the conducting teachers/supervisors (of basic education), in order to reduce the distances caused by contrasts of privileges, power and status.

Many strategies mentioned by the aforementioned authors find correspondence with research centered on understanding research and postgraduate advising. However, we must emphasize that, despite the similarities, this process has characteristics at different levels of education. With regard to advising, Dias, Patrus and Magalhães (2011) point out difficulties in completing final works, often caused by the unpreparedness of the advisor teachers. In this sense, the authors propose a strategy for the development of monographs, dissertations and theses, with orientations for advisors and, mainly, students with advisors, seeking to contribute to mitigate the lack of didactic aspects in the orientation of conclusion works. A model is offered for the development of such works and tips to minimize problems that hinder the orientation process.

When studying the relationship between advisors and advised students in stricto sensu postgraduate courses, Viana (2008, p. 99) considers that each tutor “has his own work style, built from his own personal and professional experience, from his values, his belief in the role of educator, in short, his own worldview”. The author considers that the affective, professional, theoretical-methodological and institutional aspects influence the activities carried out by the advisors. Making a comparison with international authors, we noticed that they resort to excessively subjective characteristics (which are not innate), assigning adjectives that refer to a value judgment of advisors and guidance, in general, as we identified in Bloom *et al.* (2007), Curtin, Stewart and Ostrove (2013) and Barres (2013).

Bloom *et al.* (2007) signal that the literature on advising confirms that the most important factor for the “success” of a graduate student is the relationship with his or her advisor. The authors summarize characteristics that the student look for in what they consider to be “good mentors”: demonstrate caring for students, be accessible, be models for personal and professional issues, bring individualized advice, be proactive to integrate students into the profession, be good listeners, encourage students, know how to “prune” at the right time but leave the decision to the students.

When comparing American graduate students, Curtin, Stewart and Ostrove (2013) concluded that the support of the advisors is associated with the feeling of belonging to the community and self-confidence of the students, that is, the more supported by the adviser, the better the student is feeling in respect to research and his/her performance. Scientific and mentoring skills are signaled by Barres (2013), without specifying them, as the most important characteristics for the choice of postgraduate advisor, being essential in the formation of graduate students to be “good scientists”. The author asserts that a “good mentoring” is a great responsibility and goes beyond graduate school, indicating that the advisor should be concerned with the next steps of the student. Barres (2013), also, expresses concern that the increased competition for research funds tends to jeopardize the “good practice” of guidance.

In short, the research reflects the scarcity of works that stick to the orientation activity as a teaching practice. Even so, they are mainly related to the teaching internship advising, the description of the personality of the “ideal” advisor and less commonly of research, monographs, dissertations and theses, reflections that we propose here.

What does Brazilian legislation say about advising?

The only direct mention of the advising process in the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education - LDB (BRASIL, 1996), which defines the Brazilian educational organization, is given in Title IV (Of Education Professionals), specifically in article 64:

The formation of education professionals for administration, planning, inspection, **supervision and educational advising** for basic education will be done in undergraduate courses in pedagogy or at the postgraduate level, at the discretion of the educational institution, guaranteed in this formation, the national common base (BRASIL, 1996, p. 26-27, authors' highlights, our translation).

In the following article, LDB refers to the minimum workload required for teacher formation: “teacher formation, except for higher education, will include teaching practice of at least three hundred hours” (BRASIL, 1996, p. 27, our translation). This teaching practice is materialized by the curricular internships in teaching, which are regulated by resolutions 1 and 2 of the National Education Council/Full Council (CNE/CP), of February 2002 (BRASIL, 2002a; 2002b), which institute, respectively, guidelines for the formation of basic education teachers and the duration and workload of undergraduate teaching courses at a higher level. The first resolution mentions practices of “advising inherent to the teaching activity” (BRASIL, 2002a, p. 1), including activities developed in the scope of teaching, research and extension, while the second sets 400 hours of curricular internship (BRASIL, 2002b), not to mention the figure of the advising teacher.

In the case of graduate students, Ordinance No. 76, of 14 April 2010, of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), indicates the teaching internship as “an integral part of the graduate student's formation, aiming at the preparation for teaching, and qualification of undergraduate education” (BRASIL, 2010, p. 8). The same document makes the teaching internship for fellows of the Social Demand Program mandatory and determines that its advising, evaluation and monitoring will be in charge of the scholarship committee of the graduate program in question.

The development of teaching and research, in addition to promoting extension activities, are covered in Chapter IV of the LDB, which deals with Higher Education. In the general recommendations for the curricular guidelines for undergraduate courses in Brazil, it is pointed out that:

The Curricular Guidelines should **include guidelines for internship activities, monograph and other activities that integrate academic**

knowledge with professional practice, encouraging the recognition of skills and competences acquired outside the school environment. In this way, formation would be ensured according to the specifics of each course, preserving, however, the principle of flexibility and adaptation to the demands of society (FRAUCHES, 2008, p. 47, authors' highlights, our translation).

Thus, we note that, although it is not a requirement of the LDB for all Higher Education courses in Brazil, the curricular guidelines refer directly to the activity of advising as mandatory in several stages of academic formation, without, however, guaranteeing formation on how to advise.

When dealing with public policies at the university, Cunha (2003) states that teachers are often forced to extrapolate their academic workloads, giving importance to weekends and holidays to dedicate themselves to their intellectual productions. The author points out that, in this context, individualism is exacerbated, with great value given to what teachers produce individually or with their students, who, in many cases, have their own intellectual productions to be added to the authorship of the advisor. In the same way that we call attention to the absence of guidelines on the orientation activity in official documents in Brazil, we also emphasize the need to develop public policies that explicitly direct the role of the advisor, implying an awareness raising with relation to this activity, which has been carried out in an individualistic way, without intentionality and without due attention.

Understanding the advisor-student relationship: historical cases

As with all work carried out in an academic environment, we believe that the orientation process is central to the formation of technical, academic and education professionals. Being a work carried out in a restricted team (no more than three members, if there is a pair of students or advisors), the construction of a synergistic cooperation relationship is one of the attributes for the student's development to be maximized. In this sense, we work brief historical reports and hypothetical experiences, freely based on real episodes, to discuss such relationships.

The relationship of intellectual orientation between disciples and mentors is as old as the documentation of human knowledge itself, well illustrated by the record of Socratic thought by his pupils, with Plato being the most mentioned of them. The very survival of Socrates' ideas was guaranteed by the devotion of his apprentices (Plato, Aristophanes and Xenophon), since there is no evidence that he himself published anything in life. Plato, in addition to being influenced by his master's moral and ethical considerations, sought the path

of philosophy as a way of maintaining the Socratic legacy, being a departure from his initial plans to dedicate himself to political life, as pointed out by Trabattoni (2012). In this case, Socrates, as a teacher, shaped not only philosophical thoughts, but also Plato's worldview, corroborating with Bloom *et al.* (2007), when admitting that mentors serve as a model for their mentees.

The ascendancy of a teacher's thinking about a disciple is, likewise, well illustrated by the relationship of Anísio Teixeira (1900-1971) with John Dewey (1859-1952). The Brazilian educator met Dewey in his master's degree and was responsible for translating his ideas into Portuguese and implementing them in the Brazilian educational system, through public policies that have lasted from the 1930s to the present (SOUZA; MARTINELLI, 2009). Influenced by Dewey ideas and his own experiences, Anísio Teixeira understood the orientation of students as a central pillar in the educational process (CARBELLO; RIBEIRO, 2015).

Still within the scope of the perpetuation and diffusion of teachers' ideas by their students, we highlight the relationship of the philosopher Karl Popper (1902-1994) with the students Paul Feyerabend (1924-1994) and Imri Lakatos (1922-1974), who, although they were not formally guided by Popper, they had their ideas strongly influenced by him. Likewise, George Soros (1930-), another disciple/student of Popper, excels in striving to disseminate his views on “open societies” in different countries and to rely on his mentor's theories about conjectures and refutations to guide his investments and social interventions (UMPLEBY, 2007).

The aforementioned cases, in which masters and disciples or, specifically, advisors and mentees are raised to positions of wide recognition, are not isolated, probably demonstrating a propensity to develop research with great potential in the scientific community. Is the scope given by the themes or by those who guide the research? It is not uncommon for episodes of Nobel prize-winning researchers who have been supervised by scientists who have won the same award. There are also cases like Arnold Sommerfeld (1868-1951), one of the physicists who taught and guided more Nobel Prize recipients, and who was never awarded, although he was nominated 84 times (CHEREP, 2020).

The trajectory of Marie Curie (1867-1934), equally, illustrates the weight that being guided by a notable researcher exerts in the academic career of a young scientist. She was the first person and the only woman to be twice awarded a Nobel Prize (1903 in Physics and 1911 in Chemistry). Her first prize was divided between her spouse, Pierre Curie (1859-1906), she and her doctoral advisor Henri Becquerel (1852-1908), in recognition of the joint research

they carried out on the “radiation phenomenon discovered by Professor Henri Becquerel” (SKWARZEC, 2011, p. 1550, our translation). Although the award was addressed to all three, with Pierre cited as the first author, it was awarded thanks to the results obtained by Marie's research, under the supervision of Becquerel, a scientist already recognized by the pioneering investigations of the radiation phenomenon.

In the case of Marie Curie, this relationship is still permeated by sexism and xenophobia, impregnated in the scientific community. Her publications only had repercussions in the academy when she left the position of first author to succeeded male authors such as Pierre Curie and Gustave Bémont, in addition to suppressing her Polish surname (WIRTÉN, 2015). Although Marie's path is often romanticized, placing her as “supported on the shoulders of giants”, the researcher's merit is even greater when we consider that she disagreed with her advisor, Becquerel, who had abandoned research with “uranium rays” (PETELENZ, 2013) - a combination of alpha particles and gamma rays. Her stubbornness, considering “uranium rays” as a fundamental problem in her research, resulted in her main contributions to the sciences, which won them the Nobel Prize in the same year that Marie Curie's thesis was presented. In this case, the disagreement did not result in a distance between the two, nor did it stop the research.

The Brazilian social sciences provide us with another representative case of split between advisor and advisor, in this case much more profound, since it resulted in divergent academic and political trajectories, even though the friendship has been preserved between the parties: Florestan Fernandes (1920-1995) and Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1931-). The rapprochement between the two began in 1951, and the following year, when Florestan took over as assistant professor at the University of São Paulo, he appointed Fernando Henrique as his assistant, causing “jealousy” among the other members of his research group, according to Bordignon (2013). The author narrates that together the two mobilize social resources from the entire university, but divergences of ideas resulted in a withdrawal, leading Cardoso to threaten to change his doctoral advisor, in the period prior to the presentation of his thesis.

The rupture between the two was considered definitive in 1968, when Florestan Fernandes demanded a public and institutional position against the military dictatorship and Fernando Henrique, on the contrary, defended a bureaucratic position, in the minutes, in the form of a disapproval note (BORDIGNON, 2013). The divergent positions took place in the theoretical field, since the advisor followed with positions more aligned with socialism and Marxism and the advisor gradually joined in more liberal, as well as political positions, since Florestan Fernandes was one of the founders and federal deputy for the Workers' Party (PT)

and Fernando Henrique Cardoso, one of the main exponents of the Brazilian Social Democracy Party (PSDB), for which he was elected president twice. The two parties, in fields clearly distinct in the political spectrum, were the main antagonists of Brazilian politics in the 1990s and 2000s.

We see, until then, that the episodes of historical character reported here have limitations with regard to the advising process, due to the little relevance given by historians to the understandings about what it is to advise in various spheres (psychological, emotional, social, pedagogical, between others). Still, they are generally centered on harmonious and successful relationships between advisors and students, mentors and pupils, offering impoverished or little problematized reports. Relationships that involve mentoring and advising are not always in perfect harmony. To illustrate some of the possible scenarios in this context, we present below four narratives inspired by real situations.

Understanding the advisor-student relationship: cases inspired by real situations

The first case refers to the student Kauê and his advisor, the researcher Ubirajara. Throughout the advising process, Kauê sought knowledge that was increasingly distant from his research focus. Seeing the student's potential and his growing curiosity, Ubirajara sought to give a diversified character to the research developed by Kauê, in order to supply his curiosity.

Although it is necessary to “prune” the student (BLOOM *et al.*, 2007), something that Ubirajara tried to do with Kauê's incessant searches, the advisor then proposed: using different methods, without escaping the research objective, making the student to channel his curiosity. Ubirajara's wisdom was essential for Kauê's growth, avoiding his frustration with the research, which could have been caused if the student felt that his knowledge was being restricted. In this way, we consider that pruning does not necessarily imply limiting the viewer's eye but channeling a dispersed curiosity by expanding his focus of interest.

The adoption of a contrasting posture by the supervisor Antônio was essential to the frustration of the student Iracema, who was endowed with an incessant curiosity, like the student in the previous case. Frequently questioned, Antônio opted for the strategy of not charging schedules and restricting the bibliographic research of Iracema, who began to feel that her knowledge was stagnating, and her field research would not be able to evolve with restricted sources of knowledge. So, intellectual clashes turned out to be inevitable since no common point was found between the needs of the student and the teacher. For Iracema, the

image of Antônio as a possibility of security was undone and replaced by fear, by the possibility of conflicts, which led her to seek another advisor, as Iracema had idealized her project.

A third case is that of the advisor Margareth and the student Guaraci. Aiming to motivate a prolific production of her student, Margareth demanded too much of specific results and deadlines, always bringing a little constructive criticism feedback. Realizing that her efforts and results were not properly evaluated or recognized, the student Guaraci became demotivated and started to seek support from other figures, such as other researchers and fellow students, making the figure of her supervisor merely virtual.

Guaraci was unable to change her advisor, as her project was made possible by Margareth. It is common for researchers in formation to join larger projects already underway, idealized by the advisors, this is part of the hierarchical relationship established between the student and the adviser. The advisor rarely tends to accept a project in which he has no experience in the subject, formation or has to seek new sources of funding to develop.

Woolston (2015) reports that, although it is not frequently addressed, the relationship between advisor and student is sometimes problematic and can result in turning points in the career of students. Not infrequently, advisors, in order to reaffirm the position of power, request extra analyzes or corrections that, probably, will do little to improve the quality of the final work. In these cases, students should seek to improve communication and seek advice from colleagues or teachers who can give an impartial opinion.

The fourth and final case, that of advisor Inã and student Lina, who rarely appeared at meetings scheduled to discuss her research. Lina, in addition to not responding to the advisor's communications, did not meet the schedule and did not carry out her research activities, making the relationship between the two more and more unsustainable. Although Inã was always available, the student did not seek guidance or to justify her absences. When looking for Lina to proceed with her master's project, Inã was verbally dislocated, which led her to give up the orientation.

Punyanunt-Carter and Wrench (2008) concluded that credibility, conflict behavior, mentoring style and verbal aggression influence the advisor=student relationship. According to the authors, the credibility of the advisors, for the students, is related to the use of conflict resolution strategies based on solutions, as well as the reliability is inversely proportional to the confrontation attitudes. The results of the research also showed that verbal aggression is considered an obstacle in the credibility of the advisors.

The relationship between advisor and student is sometimes compared to a contract or a marriage, since contracts are built on rights and duties previously established and marriages can be abusive or reliable. In addition, all of these relationships can be broken when the respect is not mutual. Although some of these parallels may be valid, we see these comparisons as problematic, as they do not describe the complexity of the advisor-student relationship, which has unique characteristics, completely disregarding the pedagogical character of the process.

According to Knox et al. (2006), teachers identify demand for time and personal satisfaction as costs and benefits of guidance, respectively. For the advisors, “good” relations with the students are based on positive personal and professional characteristics, mutual respect, open communication, similar professional trajectories between advisors and students and lack of conflict. In contrast, relationships are considered problematic when they present negative perspectives of personal characteristics, lack of respect, problems in the development of research, communication problems, disagreements in the relationship, avoidance of conflict and feeling of ineffective work with the students.

Mistaken (sometimes oppressive) postures adopted by advisors can be the result of lack of formation and not necessarily of negative feelings that they have for their students. The formation of advisors often results from orientations that they received throughout their academic lives and from searches linked to their personal curiosities (WINCH; TERRAZZAN, 2011). Not that we deny the possibility or discard personality discrepancies as engines of disastrous relationships between students and advisors, but we believe that, even with good intentions, the idiosyncrasies of students and teachers can yield conflicting experiences whenever they are not treated by the pedagogical perspective, which include knowledge related to teaching how to research, write, receive criticism, incorporate corrections and, why not say, career and life advice.

Final considerations

The orientation process has been approached in research in a timid way, mainly in relation to the Brazilian context. Most of the discussions currently focus on the advising of teaching internship disciplines, which are essential in the formation of professionals from different areas. However, there is still a need to bring advising teachers closer to supervising teachers. Most of the research focused on advising is foreign, and there is an absence of discussions related to the didactic planning of this process.

Brazilian educational legislation does not explore the role of the advisor at different levels of education, although it presents the need for supervision and advising in the teaching stage of teachers in formation. In the curricular guidelines for Higher Education courses, the figure of the advisor appears as necessary for the development of monographs and other professional formation activities without, however, explaining what are the attributions of advisors and students. Teachers are overloaded and prioritize mentoring as an individual activity, aiming at intellectual production, which, together with competition for research funds, tends to weaken the potential of the mentoring process.

The cases, historical and hypothetical, lend themselves to highlight different attitudes of teachers and students throughout the advising process(es). From the historical cases, we can understand the role of the advisor in different contexts, influencing the advisor since the construction of the world view, transmission of intellectual capital and even the erasure of their contributions. However, the historical records still need to be deepened in order to understand the advisor-student relationships. On the other hand, the hypothetical cases, inspired by real experiences, seek to detail aspects of (psycho) pedagogical importance of the guidance process, through different positions of advisors and student, in specific, but recurring situations.

From this essay, we hope to contribute to a greater clarification on the bases that govern the advising process(es), in addition to fostering discussions, expanding this thematic field. Formative practices centered on the issue of guidance are an alternative, among others, that can expand the educational character of advising, generally built based on experiences, in an unintentional and “disoriented” way.

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