

PEDAGOGICAL COORDINATORS: TRAJECTORY, SKILLS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

COORDENADORES PEDAGÓGICOS: TRAJETÓRIA, COMPETÊNCIAS E RESPONSABILIDADES

COORDINADORES PEDAGÓGICOS: TRAYECTORIA, HABILIDADES Y RESPONSABILIDADES

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ABSTRACT: This article of bibliographic nature aims to analyze how the work of the pedagogical coordinator in the school happens, since its emergence until today. It can be noticed from the research that being a pedagogical coordinator requires, in addition to academic formation, a series of other attributes, such as being a mediator, encourager, *the one who questions*, collaborator, among others. It is important that the coordinator plans and prioritizes his actions as an educator and articulator of the school's political-pedagogical project so as not to get lost along the way, being only at the service of the school's urgencies and emergencies. The establishment of a trusting relationship with teachers is also essential for the pedagogical work to flow in the best possible way, which can result in quality education.

KEYWORDS: Coordinator. Teachers. School.

RESUMO: *Este artigo de cunho bibliográfico possui como objetivo analisar como acontece o trabalho do coordenador pedagógico dentro da escola, desde seu surgimento até os dias de hoje. Percebe-se com a pesquisa que ser coordenador pedagógico requer, além de formação acadêmica, uma série de outros atributos, como por exemplo ser mediador, incentivador, problematizador, colaborador, entre outros. É importante que ele planeje e priorize suas ações enquanto formador e articulador do projeto político-pedagógico da escola para não se perder ao logo do caminho, estando apenas a serviço de urgências e emergências da escola. O estabelecimento de uma relação de confiança com os professores também é fundamental para que o trabalho pedagógico flua da melhor maneira possível, podendo resultar em uma educação de qualidade.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Coordenação. Professores. Escola.*

RESUMEN: *Este artículo bibliográfico tiene como objetivo analizar cómo se realiza el trabajo del coordinador pedagógico en la escuela, desde su surgimiento hasta la actualidad. De la investigación se puede ver que ser un coordinador pedagógico requiere, además de la formación académica, una serie de otros atributos, como ser un mediador, animador,*

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problematizador, colaborador, entre otros. Es importante que el planifique y priorice sus acciones como formador y articulador del proyecto político-pedagógico de la escuela para no perderse en el camino, estando solo al servicio de las urgencias y emergencias de la escuela. El establecimiento de una relación de confianza con los maestros también es esencial para que el trabajo pedagógico fluya de la mejor manera posible, lo que puede resultar en una educación de calidad.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Coordinación. Maestros. Escuela.*

Introduction

According to Almeida and Placco (2006), a school is characterized as such only because teachers and students are concentrated there. These teachers form a group that is constantly planning, redesigning and making decisions about what and how will something be taught to students and even considering the individuality of each one, they need to be led by the Pedagogical Coordinator who is the figure that will share with them the responsibilities of the teaching and learning process and will “enable the construction of the group, to develop a collective work towards overcoming the fragmentations common in schools today” (ALMEIDA; PLACCO 2006, p. 27).

This bibliographic article aims to analyze how the work of the pedagogical coordinator takes place in the school, from its inception to the present day.

The pedagogical coordinator is the one who foresees, articulates, mediates and evaluates the school's pedagogical actions with and for the teacher. According to Almeida and Placco (2011), it is up to the Pedagogical Coordination to raise questions with the teachers, to lead them to reflections on their pedagogical practice in the classroom. The authors also emphasize that the Pedagogical Coordinator is the one who participated in the elaboration and/or adaptation of the pedagogical proposal, thus being able to give new meanings to the school's educational practice and to the teachers' pedagogical practice. According to Vasconcelos (2011), the Pedagogical Coordinator teacher is always attentive to the needs of the teachers, he welcomes them, listens, subsidizes, interacts, and questions, provokes and problematizes issues related to classroom practices; however, this was not always so.

For many years the role of the Pedagogical Coordinator was seen as that which had the objective of “watching”, verifying purely and simply that the teacher was fulfilling his obligation (VENAS, 2012). Emerged from Pedagogical Supervision and present in Pedagogy courses, pedagogical coordination was represented by the figure of an adult who had the function of “supervising” activities that included children, such a function exists before the

emergence of formal schools. In Antiquity, this “supervisory function” occurred “through the care and observation of adults in relation to children and young people, in primitive communities” (VENAS, 2012, p. 01, our translation). In Greece, the pedagogue was the professional in charge of the supervisory function, he was the one who took the children to the place reserved for learning. However, as time went by, the pedagogue became the educator himself, who had the function of teaching the children.

When the industrial ideology, which valued technical reason first, extinguishing any measure of reason in relation to the reality that came from sensory experience, began to establish itself, not even the school was spared. School supervision, which, at that time, struggled to free itself from the supervisory concept and enter into other more integrated and coordinating concept, has not managed to advance (VENAS, 2012).

The Pedagogy higher education course started in 1939 and, since then, it has had to adapt and readjust according to the historical moment experienced by the country, thus forgetting the identity of the pedagogue. Even today, adjustments continue to be made in the curriculum of the course, sometimes due to the job market, other times due to reasons of the area of knowledge itself (VENAS, 2012).

In the past, after being formed as a pedagogue, the professional had two possibilities of working inside the school: inside or outside the classroom. However, non-teaching activities did not have a regulation that supported them. So, the formation of these professionals took place in the practice of the function, thus the profile of the educators in question was outlined. At that time, terms such as “pedagogical coordination”, “school inspection” and even “qualification” did not exist formally, only in schools. This shows that the non-teaching work appeared even before a certification of the function (VENAS, 2012).

Regarding the definition of the role of the Pedagogical Coordinator, Vasconcellos (2007) warns us that his image and function are still associated with that of the supervisor. Therefore, the author provides a definition of what Pedagogical Supervision is:

Supervision is not (or should not be) teacher inspector, it is not snitch (which delivers teachers to the principal or maintainer), it is not a errands boy (who carries a message from the principal to the teachers and from the teachers to the principal), it's not a wildcard/tasksman/multitask assistant/life saver (assistant director, assistant secretary, nurse, social worker, etc.), it's not a filler (which “herd” students in the classroom in case of lack of a teacher), is not a bureaucrat (who deals with reports and more reports, graphs, meaningless statistics, sending a lot of papers to the teachers to fill - “paper” school), is not an office worker (which is far from practice and the effective challenges of educators), it is not a guide (which has tips and solutions for all problems, a kind of inexhaustible source of techniques, recipes), it is not a

generalist (understands almost nothing of almost everything)
(VASCONCELLOS, 2007 , p. 86-87, our translation).

The fact is that school is the place where a series of knowledge is learned. There, “people do not choose their peers or colleagues; however, they meet with the objective of working together during their lifetime” (AMADO; GOUVEIA, 2012, p. 83, our translation). It is at school that the possibility of learning and interactions present inside and outside the classroom are expanded.

However, it is also there that, always, one is involved in urgencies and emergencies of all kinds, this is where the figure of the Pedagogical Coordinator is inserted. This troubled daily life is shown as one of those responsible for the lack of time and focus of the Pedagogical Coordinator, “printing a chaotic routine, centered on attending students and other demands” (AMADO; GOUVEIA, 2012, p. 83, our translation).

According to the aforementioned authors, among these demands are: telephone service; attendance to teachers; meeting with principal; conversation with students; guidance to family members; substitution of teachers; system requests; monitoring the entry and exit of students; class organization; disciplinary sanctions, among other things.

In this way, it becomes complicated for the Pedagogical Coordinator to carry out the work that is up to him and that is why he has to organize himself, so that his routine is not reduced to “putting out fires”, mediating conflict situations with teachers, family and students. The point is that, many times, not even the Coordinator himself knows for sure what in fact is or is not his assignment. This is due to “an institution that does not have a clear social function or a culture of ongoing formation” (AMADO; GOUVEIA, 2012, p. 85, our translation).

Methodology

The research was carried out from bibliographic analysis in sources referenced in this article, such as: Placco (2011), Vasconcellos (2004), Amado and Gouveia (2012) among others, who weave some discussions about what the Pedagogical Coordinator's role is and the importance of their interventions in the work that teachers carry out with students in schools. There was no data collection in physical locations, nor case studies, something that would be of great relevance and would bring the possibility of deepening the theme. To support this work, we sought the concepts defined by the aforementioned authors, together with

reflections and experiences of the author of this article, discussing them in order to raise and recognize the importance of such theme within school management.

From school supervision to pedagogical coordination

In the 1980s, with the “*Diretas já*” movement and the promulgation of the Federal Constitution of 1988, people felt freer to go in search of their rights and social achievements, becoming less and less accepting of authoritarian practices. School Supervision then begins to become inadequate, as a new economic and political scenario begins to be designed. Then, in the mid-1980s, some states started to use the term “Pedagogical Coordinator” to name the figure who would be responsible for ensuring educational quality and learning (VENAS, 2012), a situation that is better defined by Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education, Law No. 9394/1996 (BRASIL, 1996).

Still in the 1990s, in the state schools of São Paulo (SP), the position of Pedagogical Coordinating Professor (PCP) was created, whose formation was an undergraduate teaching degree and not necessarily Pedagogy. According to Fernandes (2009), the role of PCP is occupied by a teacher who, elected by his peers, starts to coordinate and monitor the school's pedagogical work. In this proposal developed in the state of São Paulo for the election of the PCP, the political, technical and pedagogical dimensions should be taken into account. However, the chosen teachers were those who had a better interpersonal relationship with the group of teachers. So, sometimes, what we had were insecure PCP, surrounded by bureaucratization. Still on this scenario, Fernandes (2009, p. 4, our translation) states that,

During the analysis of this context of creating the role of the PCP, some questions led us to a broader investigation. Was the creation of the function specifically linked to the moments of recent educational reforms? In other political settings, would the role also be necessary? Why was the function, a historical claim of the teaching category, incorporated into the neoliberal reform package? What is the professionalism present in the work of the PCP? Based on these issues, we started to work with the hypothesis that the role of Pedagogical Coordinating Teacher was incorporated into the current educational reforms more as a control mechanism than as an articulation function of collective work, but rather a progressive flag.

Consequently, instead of being an articulator of the pedagogical work developed at school, the PCP had the function of receiving and implementing ready-made packages of educational reforms (VENAS 2012).

Silva (2002) states that it is a requirement of the World Bank, a non-profit international financial agency, of which Brazil has been part since 1993, that for the

implementation of educational projects there should be:

increasing school time, extending the length of the school cycle, increasing students' learning capacity, supporting pre-school education, improving the classroom environment, supporting health and nutrition systems, the improvement of the formation of teachers, greater formation in pedagogical skills and increments to teaching, administrative and organizational restructuring with dismemberment of the system, the development of administrative skills, creation of the performance evaluation system, the provision of information systems that include organizational efficiency, parental persuasion about the value of education and the mobilization of the community for economic benefits (p. 83, our translation).

Thus, the great influence of the World Bank in the “formulation of educational policies was defining a way of thinking about the elements that organize school life” (VENAS, 2012, p. 83). All these demands were feeding and reinforcing the capitalist system and the neoliberalist ideal. In this way, the Pedagogical Coordinator also often assumed this practice at school, being a controller of pedagogical activities, in addition to exercising functions that fled from their real assignment.

Tasks of the pedagogical coordinator

Having the clarity of his function, the Pedagogical Coordinator is able to organize time according to his obligations. Therefore, it is important that he recognizes himself as an educator and articulator of the school's collective educational actions. However, it is not alone that the coordinator changes the direction of his work. It is collectively, with the organization and definition of the roles and functions of the professionals that make up the institution, in a collaborative way that this paradigm shift will take place.

Amado and Gouveia (2012) propose a list with eight attributions that they consider to be the Pedagogical Coordinator:

1. Formative meeting - the focus of this meeting is on reflecting on the practices carried out in the classroom and its objective is to find answers to pedagogical questions that the group of teachers faces. “Studies and planning can be done in pairs or small groups, depending on the content, objectives and needs of teachers” (AMADO; GOUVEIA, 2012, p. 86, our translation). Also important is the collection to be used by the Pedagogical Coordinator in these discussions.
2. Observation and monitoring of teaching work - one of the tools for improving pedagogical practice is the monitoring of the classroom, as it is there that every

formative discussion that takes place at school becomes concrete. However, some Pedagogical Coordinators still encounter resistance on the part of teachers to carry out this work. Thus, it is essential that, at the beginning, teachers offer to have their classes observed. After the observation, it is necessary that the Coordinator give a feedback to the teacher about what was observed and can also turn it into focus for a formative meeting. “In these moments, it is essential for the teacher to share with his colleagues the observations he made of his own class and the feedback received from the PC before making his comments” (AMADO; GOUVEIA, 2012, p. 87, our translation).

3. Monitoring - the Pedagogical Coordinator can monitor the teaching activities through the analysis of projects, teaching and lesson plans, didactic sequences, student notebooks, assessment activities, among others. Almeida and Placco (2012) point out that the Pedagogical Coordinator will make an agreement in advance with each teacher whether it will be dealt with individually or during ongoing formation with all teachers.
4. Formation planning - for the role of educator to be carried out satisfactorily, it is necessary for the Coordinator to periodically revisit his formation project, setting up formative guidelines for each meeting. According to Almeida and Placco (2012), for this to happen, there is need to study and research authors and documents that converge with the objective to be achieved at the meeting.
5. Collection organization - the collection means the political-pedagogical project of the school, the teaching and lesson plans, portfolios, assessments, among others. These “must always be in order to be consulted and serve to assemble the collection and the pedagogical memory of the institution” (AMADO; GOUVEIA, 2012, p. 89-90, our translation).
6. Planning and study of formative practices - Before entering a formative meeting, the Pedagogical Coordinator needs to be prepared to deepen and contextualize knowledge, this will help the teaching staff to better understand the teaching object, as well as the way of teaching, for that purpose, he needs to study, investigate and plan (ALMEIDA; PLACCO, 2012).
7. Record production - It is essential that everything observed by the coordinator in the classrooms and analyzed in the lesson plans is recorded in writing. Such records are intended for feedback to teachers and to help in the planning of the Pedagogical Coordinator himself. Almeida and Placco (2012) point to the portfolio as one of the forms of organizing these records.

8. Meeting with students and teachers - Always in partnership with teachers, it is also the Coordinator's role to observe and evaluate students, in order to plan pedagogical support and/or “communicate to students the aspects in which they need to improve” (AMADO; GOUVEIA, 2012, p. 90, our translation).

According to Placco (2004), the work of the Pedagogical Coordinator must be based on the planning that precedes the pedagogical activities carried out by the teachers at the school, or even on their accompaniment and guidance. The Pedagogical Coordinator is the one who foresees, articulates, mediates and evaluates the school's pedagogical actions with and for the teacher.

In the same line, Almeida and Placco (2011) affirm that it is up to the Pedagogical Coordination to raise questions with the teachers, to lead them to reflections on their pedagogical practice in the classroom. The authors also point out that the Pedagogical Coordinator is the one who participates in the elaboration and/or adaptation of the pedagogical proposal, thus being able to give new meanings to the school's educational practice and to the teachers' pedagogical practice.

For this, it is also necessary the formation the Pedagogical Coordinator, so that he feels strengthened, safe and able to perform the work for which he was chosen. This formation can come from the Department of Education or even from simple exchanges with more experienced peers or professionals. The Coordinator is also part of a group that reflects on pedagogical issues and practices.

The work of the pedagogical coordinator in practice

For Vasconcellos (2011), the Pedagogical Coordinating Professor is always attentive to the needs of the teachers. He welcomes them, listens, subsidizes, interacts and questions, provokes and problematizes issues related to classroom practices. This means that the actions of the teacher with his students run through the actions of the Coordinator.

Regarding the figure of the Pedagogical Coordinator at the school, Placco (2011) presents three possible views:

1. One that represents the objectives and principles of the school network in which operates;
2. Educator whose obligation is to offer formation to teachers;
3. Someone who tries to assert his convictions in the school's Political-Pedagogical

Project.

Among the three views, the second is seen by the author as the most complex, as it involves actions that aim at the personal and professional growth of people and because she understands that, in order to form teachers, the Pedagogical Coordinator must be attentive to issues such as the culture of the groups, common and different values of individuals, interpersonal relationships, subjectivity produced in different contexts of relationships.

The school is the space where society and culture are reproduced and, at the same time, transformed (PLACCO, 2006). Likewise, the practices of teachers in schools also present dialectics and points of view that are defended and, soon after, contradicted. It is part of the Pedagogical Coordinators' job to expose and make explicit the contradictions behind such practices, so that there is a professional growth for teachers and, consequently, a positive transformation in their classes.

According to Orsolon (2006), for the Coordinator to act as an agent that produces change, regarding teacher formation, some actions are necessary:

1. Promote coordination work that is connected with the school organization/management

When the group of teachers perceives that there is an interaction/relationship in the work of the school team as a whole, in which the pedagogical and administrative actions talk to each other and, moreover, when the school management is democratic and participative, with the possibility that everyone gets involved, this results in the construction of a school in which relations and work plans can take place in a less compartmentalized way, thus becoming more shared and integrated (PLACCO, 2006).

2. Conduct collective work, integrated with school actors

If there is a need for change in the school, the first step is to work collectively, to understand that fragmented and individualized actions do not promote transformations. The Coordinator, as one of the articulators of this collective work, must be able to read, observe and gather the needs of those who work in the school (PLACCO, 2006) and, from there, introduce innovations, so that everyone is committed to what has been proposed.

3. Mediating teaching competence

The mediating function is also that of the Pedagogical Coordinator and, in order for

this mediation to be in the direction of transformation, it is important that the latter consider and value the knowledge, experiences, interests and way of working of each teacher (PLACCO, 2006), as well as creating conditions to question this practice and make resources available to modify it.

4. *Encourage innovative curricular practices*

It is the task of the Pedagogical Coordinator to propose new practices to teachers. However, this work is not easy, as it leads to a moment of joint creation, the exercise of freedom and the possibilities of partnership. According to Placco (2006, p. 23, our translation):

Accompanying this work makes it possible to trigger a process of reflection in action (continuing education), during which the teacher experiences a new way of teaching and learning and, through this new experience, reviews his way of being and doing, as innovation affects his person and his professional activity.

5. *Investing in continuing teacher education at the school*

One of the Coordinator's functions is to provide formation for teachers at the school, these moments usually occur in Collective Pedagogical Work Schedules (CPWS) and Pedagogical Meetings. This work gives the teacher the conditions to make his practice an object of reflection and research, in addition to taking him to problematize his actions, transforming them (PLACCO, 2006).

6. *Establish partnership with the student: include him/her in the teaching work planning process*

The school exists for and by the student and, in order for it to reach its objective of forming them, it is essential that the student be one of the agents that mobilize the change of the teacher (PLACCO, 2006). Thus, the Coordinator needs to find ways to enable the student to actively participate in the construction of the school curriculum, whether with opinions, suggestions and even assessments. In addition, the teacher obtains greater knowledge from his students and experiences postures of flexibility and change.

7. *Create opportunities for the teacher to integrate his/her person into the school*

One of the biggest problems in education is fragmentation, be it in the curriculum, in the subjects, in the school management team, and so it is with the teacher. What he is

(personal) should not be disconnected from what he does (professional), and it is up to the Pedagogical Coordinator to provide spaces and situations so that they can share their experiences and position themselves as citizens and professionals that they are (PLACCO, 2006).

8. *Seek to meet the needs revealed by the teacher's desire*

In the planning of the Coordination, the wishes and desires of the teachers must be included. Thus, the Coordinator will find a favorable situation to carry out transformative actions in the school.

9. *Establish a working partnership with the teacher*

According to Placco (2006), although it seems obvious to say that the work of the Pedagogical Coordinator and the teacher take place in partnership, it seems necessary to point out that this dynamic, when it really occurs, enables actions and decision-making that can guarantee the achievement of the established objectives.

10. *Providing challenging situations for teachers*

When the teacher feels challenged, he leaves the comfortable situation in which he often finds himself and starts to feel instigated to seek new ideas, new studies, new perspectives and, consequently, new actions. And it is through the monitoring of the teacher's actions that the coordinator will be able to challenge him and with that “Trigger a work of monitoring the teaching action, which privileges the critical reflection of the teacher's practice, moves him towards change [...]” (PLACCO, 2001, p. 26, our translation).

When teachers and coordinators act together, in the decisions that will direct the pedagogical actions in the school, mistakes are repaired and there is a greater and deeper reflection of the activities before they are directed to the students. Thus, the process of teacher formation is related to their practices. Many coordinators recognize that it is important to discuss with the teachers the actions that will be carried out with the students, “they think it is necessary to know how the teaching and learning relationships occur in the classrooms, especially regarding the way the teacher directs the child's interaction with knowledge” (PLACCO, 2001, p. 57, our translation).

Final considerations

As the reflections were articulated, the author became anxious and became more interested in the work in question, this was due to the fact that she was a Pedagogical Coordinator herself and it made her reflect on the applicability of this study in the school where she works. This means that this article is a landmark of a synthetic transformation in the formative process, of who writes it to you and reflect through the readings, aiming to pass them through in the most explicit way possible.

Given the above, we can see how fundamental the work of the pedagogical coordinator is within the school and, at the same time, the existence of impasses that hinder the full development of his duties as a teacher educator and articulator of the political-pedagogical project of the school, as a mediator of conflict situations or be led to perform tasks that are not related to their role.

In this regard, it is essential that he has a plan and that he establishes a work routine so that he can achieve the objectives he has established and carry out the activities that are in fact part of his assignment.

In the same way that teachers form students by mediating knowledge, the pedagogical coordinator is the one who forms the teacher in the school, problematizes what is taught to students in the classroom and assists in reflecting on their actions, the known praxis.

As the pedagogical coordinator brings theoretical support to the formation, gives feedback on classes he attended or observations about lesson plans he analyzed, asks provocative questions when he sees need, he contributes to the teaching praxis of the group of teachers at school.

However, as already said, the coordinator must be aware of issues such as the culture of groups, common and different values of individuals, interpersonal relationships, subjectivity produced in different contexts of relationships, so that, in addition, he ceases to be seen as the one that is there to watch or inspect (a view that is still present in schools today). The teacher needs to see you as a partner, someone who can ask for help. This trust is acquired over time, with each speech, writing and careful and respectful action of the Pedagogical Coordinator towards his teachers and other social actors who are part of the school context. Thus, the reciprocal will certainly be true and, more than anyone, the student will win.

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