Teachers-Students through the Formation in Parfor, Dialogues and Movements of Theirselves

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the positions of "I-voices" and movements throughout a training process offered by the Plano Nacional da Formação de Professores da Educação Básica (PARFOR) (National Plan of Basic Education Teachers Formation) at Serrinha, Bahia, Brazil. The research was based on the theoretical and methodological framework of the dialogical self of Hermans et al (1992), Hermans, Hermans Konopka (2010), Bakhtin (2010), Salgado et al (2007), and Valsiner (2012). Ten teachers-students were interviewed using a qualitative research study of multiple cases. The techniques of data collection were mapped as a dialogical self, with narrative interviews and diagrams of I-positions. The analysis of the I-voices and dialogues resulted into the following categories: I-mother ←→ I-wife; I-teacher ←→ I-student; support ←→no support; explicit curriculum ←→ experiencied curriculum; family expectations ←→ valorization of education. The "I-positions dialogues" highlighted tensions and ambiguities that characterized the experiences during the formation of PARFOR. To cope with the challenge of teaching, learning and giving support to their family's needs at the same time, the teachers-students showed a perception of incompleteness, the need for new knowledge and investment in new formations. In doing so, they may arrive to educational levels previously unimaginable.

Keywords: Dialogues. Movements. Selves. Teachers-students.

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Introduction

The present work is based on the thesis "Between cocoon and wing: dialogues and movements of the selves from Teachers-students through the formation in PARFOR", which title makes reference to a metaphor: "Between cocoon and wing", a phrase that one of the Teachers-students interviewed for the study used to describe how she felt through the formation process.

The National Plan of Basic Education Teachers Formation (PARFOR) is a program developed from the federal government of Brazil, that offers formation to teachers from public schools of Basic Education, in order to enable them to achieve the graduation degree. This Formation Program is divided in four steps: 1. choose of the graduation course and registration; 2. the municipal secretary validates the registration; 3. public universities or faculties organize and provide the courses; 4. the Brazilian Federal Agency for the Support and Evaluation of Graduate Education (CAPES) coordinates and evaluates the quality of the program.

The PARFOR was a result from the Decree n. 6755, from 29th Februar 2009, item 3 of Article 11, that institutes the creation of graduation courses or special programs to teachers, who work at leat 3 years in public schools of Basic Education without graduation or with graduation in a different area.

In Bahia (one of Brazilians states), the Universidade do Estado da Bahia (UNEB) and the Institution Anísio Teixeira (IAT) are the responsible ones for the Administration, organization and execution of the PARFOR, offering graduation courses from Biology, Physics, Mathematics, Computation, Fitness, Geography, History, Arts, Chemical, Sociology, Portuguese and Pedagogy to this Program.

The students of PARFOR are referred as teachers-students because they are "parallel to the formation, also teachers from public schools in the municipal and state net of Basic Education" (PARFOR Political Pedagogical Project , 2013, 62). So the term teacher-student is used to express the specific situation of the participants of the Program.

Method

The method of the research was based in the concept of qualitative research study of multiple cases, that can solve many particular questions in the social sciences (Minayo,2000). Working differently as the quantification process, this technique with a world of signification, motives, wishes, faith, values and attitudes, in other words the space of the relationships, processes and phenomena that can not be quantified. In this study is always intended to capture the participant's perspective, that is the way they see the questions(LÜDKE; ANDRÉ, 1986, p. 12).

The study of multiple cases highlights the natural complexity of the situations, showing the relation between their components and emphasizing the understanding from the people, that are involved in these cases. This concept of research has also basis in the principle that the knowledge can always develop, what is important in the context of this study, that aims to understand the dialogues and movements from the selves of Teachers-students through the training in PARFOR.

In this context the narratives interviews showed to be an appropriate technique from data collection. From the narrative interviews I-positions diagrams for each teacher-student and a synthese were produced based on Hermans (2010).

As technique of data collection was also applied the dialogical self map, a method based on *Family Circles Method* (FCM), that allows the participants to illustrate a representation of their personal lives, the bounds and spaces, close relatives and the distance of their relationships (CHAUDHARY; SHARMA, 2008). In the first moment the participants are asked to draw a circle, which represents their selves and then they are invited to illustrate the significant other. The distance between the circles and their places are determinated from the participant.

In this study each teacher-student mapped their self in three different time perspectives, one of five years before that moment, one of the present and one of five years in the future.

Participants

Ten teachers-students were recruited as participants of the research, all of them were women, with children and students of Pedagogy in PARFOR at Serrinha-Bahia. They received fictional names, as showed in table 1:

NAME	AGE	YEARS WORKING AS A TEACHER	WORKING HOURS	MARITAL STATUS	NUMBER OF CHILDREN
Patrícia	37	4 years	40 hours	Married	4
Ivonilde	40	21 years	40 hours	Married	3
Elisete	28	6 years	40 hours	Married	2
Rita	34	12 years	40 hours	Married	3
Geisa	34	9 years	40 hours	Married	2
Vilara	43	6 years	40 hours	Married	2
Silvia	38	6 years	40 hours	Married	1
Janete	32	7 years	40 hours	Married	2
Cenilza	33	7 years	40 hours	Married	1
Ana	39	14 years	40 hours	Married	2

Table 1: Characterization of the participants

Dialogical Self theory

The Dialogical Self theory is based on a group of studies from Hermans et al (1992) about self and narratives, which were inspired in the self theory from William James (1890) and Bakhtin's (1984;2010) polyphonic novels, that is a feature of narrative able to represent many points of view and multiple voices.

James' studies created a first understanding about the divisible structure of self to psychology, in his point of view the self could be described in four different parts: material self, social self, spiritual self and pure ego, from those the three first ones were directly related to the empiric life.

The material self involves from the body structure until the properties of someone. The social self is related to the images that the others relate to the person, that shows how the people around one recognize him in the society. This perception from the others about the one can also interfere on his own emotional perception of himself. The spiritual self is made of the psychic abilities related to the person. The pure ego is referred to the sense of sameness, this is the sense of the personal identity. So this forth part of the self is the "I" that knows and the other parts are the "me" , that is known. It is possible to conclude from James' studies, that in the self exists an distinction between "I" and "me", what highlights the continuity principal from the self experience.

With the basis from James' studies (1890) Hermans and Hermans-Konopka(2010) discuss that this conception of the self is an inspiration to study it in the interface from psychology and philosophy. In James' analysis were also introduced concepts like "appropriation" and "repudiation" , that are important when the self decides which parts must be accepted or rejected. In this case the thought is the agent with the knowledge as well as the power to choose. The consequence is that everything becomes a process of appropriation or repudiation of the self.

Bakhtin is a very important self theorist, as his dialogical perception in his work made it possible to comprehend that the human personality is not restricted to an unique centre (SALGADO et al, 2007, 18), but really a result of dialogical processes between "author" and "actor". In Bakhtin's theory of polyphonic novels, the polyphony itself is based on the creation of different voices, each expressing an influence on the relationship and commitment to life and society.

Analysis of the dialogues

The analysis of the interviews, mapped selves and diagrams of I-positions resulted into the following categories: I-mother ←→ I-wife; I-teacher ←→ I-student; support ←→no support; explicit curriculum ←→ experiencied curriculum; family expectations ←→ valorization of education. Each one of them was discussed in order to better understand how this positions dialogues.

I-mother←→I-wife

The journey as mother-wife is revealed from the teachers-students as really difficult, as they must plan their time to take care of their families and household, they all made

clear that the support of their husbands was essential to a good management of their time. The situation was especially hard to Patricia, who does not receive any help from her husband and should take care of the children and house by her own.

The narratives also showed that the concepts of "take care of children and house" are seemed from the teachers-students as a responsibility of the woman and the husbands are quoted only as someone to help, as exemplified from the Teacher-student Cenilza "As a mother I take my responsability [...] when I arrive at home if that is time I cook, if not I say: 'Make something for us to eat' and he husband) makes." (Teacher-student Cenilzas).

The use of the word "help" reveals that for the teachers-students the husbands have no obligation to collaborate with the household, that is a consequence of the conception of family in their culture. Valsiner (2012, 23) defends that culture is treated as one inherent, systemic organizer of the psychological systems from the individual and cultural tools are brought to the subjective personal world, where they singularly change the subjective.

Although the help of the husbands they will to be able to handle everything, in order to be an example from strong woman to their children. In this context they feel guilty when they don't have the time to be with their kids.

Be a mother is a very hard work, because we must be [...] prepared to everything. Be there when needed, raising a child in the better way possible and when you're also a student that is complicated even more so because in the weekends, the time I used to be with them, I'm here in the training" (Teacher-student Rita)

It is possible to realize that is a tension between the will to be with the family and the commitment to study. As a consequence outer and inner voices are created to help the teachers-students to cope with the difficulties and keep at their studies. As the teacher-student Patricia exemplifies: "sometimes my second daughter say to me: 'No mom, don't give up!' [...] and nowadays I'm surer about what I want to do, I don't think about giving up". Based on Valsiner (2012) it is possible to conclude that real and imaginary voices emerge in internal and external dimensions and are able to conduce to a positioning.

Hermans (2004, 13) affirms that different parts of the self are not only involved in communicative exchanges, but are also under relative dominance, with some parts being more powerful or speaking louder than other parts. In this sense, the caring mother position is highlighted as a motivation to the improvement of their professional and academic life, in order to provide better conditions for their children. Also emerges a tension to keep the family together. In this scenario, the wife condition moves ambiguously to the denial process (two collaborators) and spouse support (eight collaborators) on the achievements. This aspect is directly related to the ways selves internalize the social structure of be a wife, be a husband, the power relations and the need for freedom in the complex relationship between husband and wife.

To Valsiner (2012,143) the most complex cultural concept is probably the notion of Family and marriage. The people are involved in these relationships and these social roles, that imply a hard work and adaptations to the social expectations.

As stated Zittoun (2009) in life, people are confronted with significant redefinition of their identities, involving changes in the body of knowledge and expertise in your workspace or in your everyday life. They live in a plurality of experiences balls, which require them to master different social routines and types of activity, belonging to a complex system. With the multiplication of transitions of life experienced by people, the relationship between these multiple levels of experience should also vary: some experience can be reduced in importance, while others become dominant at certain times. In all these cases, people have to define your own values and actions systems in a complex world.

I-teacher ←→ I-student

The ten participants indicated that the dialogue between the I- teacher←→ I-student caused changes in their praxis, especially in their professional qualifications, methodology, the practice in the classroom, their point of view about the student reality.

The way of working in school, the methodology that we used at school, the resources we used, all changed, because in the past we taught only using the board and stuff. Today we see that is not enough, then I have changed a lot and the training helped a lot, because the readings helped to understand that (teacher-student Elisete).

The research participants' statements reveal the movements and dialogues between I-student←→I-teacher, describing the achievements that began to echo in their work from the training in PARFOR. As Valsiner (2012,109) defends, humans are not injunctions only in terms of their membership in groups, communities and societies; they are also injunctions in relation to its own course of life. Faced with this assertion, the present in a person's life sets in a border or from our personal past toward the future contained therein and the infinitely small moment of this is inevitable bounder to be cross - only to be inevitable redone in a new form (Valsiner, 2012, 109-110).

These dialogic positions about I-teacher are softly related to I-student dialogues. Many of the teacher-students report having shyness and fear at public presentations. Therefore, the break of this fear , that followed them during their school time, are also an opportunity provided during the training in PARFOR . Thus, is, as stated Zittoun (2009), a call for new ideas, new solutions, or new ways of acting or thinking. If life always requires regular changes as a transitive process, a break calls for deeper substantive changes. In this sense, a break is a catalyst for intransitive change. In the development perspective, such changes followed by intransitive breaks are of great interest, it is they who provide the appeal by the what is new and the context in which it can emerge as to Zittoun (2003), a flexible space is required to change and a "good enough change" must be found between keeping the past and create somenting new, which requires probably a lot of trial and error, and needs time and space.

Another relevant point in the relations of the teachers-students is related to the infrastructure offered by the university to students PARFOR, since according to the following reports, it is an evident discomfort in space where happen classes.

As a student, I can see differences in university, because when we come to campus, we hear the comment, 'Oh, because they are PARFOR students ', we feel a bit lower than the regular students. Even the space in which we study, it was supposed to be a more welcoming place, because it is difficult for us to spend all day in that hot room, too hot, you know? Sometimes it comes to be so unbearable. And also there is no library in the space of our course. (Teacher-student Patricia)

This narrative makes reference to the sense of appreciation of the self on the other. According to Bakhtin (cited by Hermans, 1999), in the relationship between I - Other (real) something new is created. As a consequence from the contact with the otherness of the other emerges a need to build a common ground. In the case of the teachers-students they would like to have access to the same infrastructural conditions from the regular classes of UNEB. Thus, they reveal that, because it is a university, these differences should not exist.

This effort for co-construction of meanings introduces a zone of tensional difference and potential development that would not be possible to achieve in isolation (Hermans, 1999). From this understanding, the tension provoked from the difference is more contrasting and more radical and potentially more innovator.

The teachers-students' feelings about the difference between them and the regular students of the University is also in line with Hermans and Hermans-Konopka (2010, 41) when the authors consider that the dimension of social power affects the self dynamics. In this sense, the self is understood in its social dimension, not limited to the individual and psychological dimension; he is seemed as a social phenomenon where concepts, images and understandings are deeply determined by power relations.

Support ←→ No support

The dialogues between the positions support←→no support follow a motion logic of dynamic interaction with each other, where there are always processes of organization and reorganization. To Salgado et al (2007, 16), all process of creating meaning and construction of personal existence can be described through a continuous process of identifying and rebuilding itself. Indeed, these processes only become possible through the continuous tension established in the dialogic relationship with the Other.

The dialogues between support←→no support can be consequences of the contributions from external voices supporting. The support of the other is felt from the teachers-students in the relationship with significant others, as PARFOR teachers, colleagues, family, which show relevant support and influences the reconstruction of meaning by the participants.

First my parents always have supported me and talking to me that they are sure that I am able to go ahead, that I should not stop there, they always have supported me. My children also always gave me such support. And my husband sometimes talks to me,that I already have a work, what I want studying, so it's a thing a little bit complicated.[…] First my parents, my brothers and some friends. I tell some friends because that is this girl at the work, who gave me the greatest support to not give up. I'm here and I just have to thank to her and to God also for the opportunity. (Teacher-student Rita).

These voices echo as a motivation to continue, but the students-teachers also explain that besides the positive words there is a great incentive for being a student and to continue in the profession means also the construction of knowledge in training. So there is an internal motivation that make them go ahead.

According to James' conception of self, it is emphasized that the existence of differences in self does not deny in any way the existence of unity and continuity. As James assumes that the appropriation process brings unity and continuity to the self, it is assumed that the appropriation itself creates unity and continuity in a self that is spatially and temporarily "distributed".

Nevertheless, another special component in the dialogues of support$\leftarrow\rightarrow$no support it is the faith, that is also seemed as a support voice quoted from the particpants of the research. It appears as a motor force of inner voices, which encourage them to continue the fight against the daily obstacles, beyond to provide audiences with their selves in order to make the decision to continue the training. As explained from the teacher-student Geisa: "To God. God, who gives me strength. I pray always, every day, 'My God, give me strength or I'll give up. I will not endure. '"

Faith comes as a cooperative element in the processes of analogy between multiplicity, contradiction and polyphony, which are nothing more than an admirable complex and experimentally an important way of understanding how the reflective and non-reflective capabilities can interact in a contemporary self that are constantly seeking to establish the truth and continuity, along with other processes of numerous complex shapes. Thus, in the context of a pluralized self, the need for faith is defend as a persistent factor in the achievement of self-identity (Adams, 2004). This is evident in the words of the teachers-students when they attribute to God the guiding force to reach its destination identity through the training, considering that in this context there is also inner voices of difficulties, but through faith new voices emerge and voices of no support become weaker in the self.

It was noticed in the statements of the participants that the voices of no support enable a process of self-audience with their selves what achieves a positioning in face of the conflicts and tensions generated by these voices, that come from different contexts, which can agree with the decisions made by the teachers –students, that recognize the importance of the training on their personal and professional life, or even guide to a different behavior with the responsible of generate this voice, depending on what emerges from the internal audience. So at certain times such voices end up being dominant or overlapping the voices of support.

Thus, the dialogical relations between the positions of no support show a constant process of negotiation, cooperation, conflict and consensus leading them to a continuous movement of positioning and repositioning

However, for Hermans and Hermans Konopka (2010) the conflicting voice can be silenced only for a while, because it can not be entirely deleted in the self. Emotionally charged as this voice is, it can be taken out of focus, but not deleted from the self forever. At any time it can become prominent again, depending on the situation or spontaneous fluctuations in the self. These internal conflicts and periods of instability become less intense when one of those voices becomes permanently dominant over the other or when two voices find a common ground of agreement.

Explicit curriculum ⬅➡ Experienced curriculum

The dialogues between explicit curriculum⬅➡ experienced curriculum are the movements generated for the relation between what the teachers-students understood and experienced in the training in PARFOR and what is scheduled for the Pedagogy graduate degree in PARFOR.

In this case it is important to highlight the stories of teachers-students about what is explicit and experienced in the Pedagogy course. Initially it is confirmed with the statements of the participants, that the disciplines from the course curriculum enable to acquire an important knowledge that can be applied in their classrooms. The teachers-students affirmed that there are many possibilities of didactic transpositions, that is, they can apply in their praxis what they learned in the formation process.

All courses we've had so far, I say for me, were very satisfactory even though somethings that happened, but most are all new thing that I have not seen, I do not experienced when I studied in high school. So it's a new thing, so for me it was rewarding [...] Instead of being four days with weekends, it would be four days in the month in the morning. On Friday instead of coming to college we would going to schools with each their coordinators to plan their lessons because then you would have the weekend to organize college work and some other things that stay pending in Friday the meeting. I grew. Holy Mary! Changed. I mean today through methodologies that teachers work with us. So I always try to go and work in the classroom to see what the reaction and the change that the students will have. (Teacher-student Cenilza).

However, in the narrative below it's possible to see a different a different point of view about the relationship of the explicit curriculum and experienced curriculum.

So when I came here, I thought that we would get something more specific to the classroom. For example, how to work with Early Childhood Education? ... Students with learning disabilities in reading, for example, how to work? But so I do not know if it's also my knowledge is little, my culture, I do not know. But I think it should work more focused on the things of the classroom ... (Teacher-student Ana).

In addition to the feedback about the difficulties of dialogue between theory and practice, it also noticed that they are not satisfied with the course workload, which takes place from Friday to Monday without considering the reality of the teachers-stdents, that workforty hours a week .

So it was possible to conclude is still a gap between the said(explcit curriculum) and the effected(experienced curriculum).

Family expectations ←→ Valorization of education

The positions in dialogic self theory are understood as flexible and dynamic, as results of endless negotiation process between internal and external voices involving different characters in dialogues with the I-author. Thus, the dialogue between the Family expectations ←→ Valorization of education is explicit in the following narrative.

They think that I'm going to become a better teacher even at the level of salary. They have even argued; you're doing it, but it will increase the salary, will increase all [...] I saw that this course gives me the support I need. (Teacher-student Elisete).

It is noticed that there is a huge financial expectation from their families while the teacher-student has a point of view beyond the economic issue, focusing their aspirations also in professional qualification. These positions emerge on expectations that fed back into the personal and the social. According to Hermans (2001, 263), social positions are governed and organized by social definitions, expectations and prescriptions, while personal positions receive their shape from specific ways in which people organize their lives. Although the way chosen by the 'I' to manage your life can often set up an opposition or a protest against social expectations.

The valorization or expectation of this valorization are endorsed by the student-teachersteachers-students Vilara, Rita and Ivonilde, in face of the changes they feel in dealing with students in the context of the classroom, in a work promotion, and also the proud to be part of the UNEB context because this fact influence significantly in the school context. In this scenario, Bakhtin's (2006) concept of polyphony emerges as important in this dialogue in face of the important trilogy (I-to-me, I-for-others and the-other-for-me). That is to say how satisfied these teachers-students are about the external voices that confirm the importance of training, even considering that staying the course difficult weekend meetings with family members.

Conclusion

The analyses followed from the narratives of mapped self, diagrams of I-positions and the interviews showed a strong effort of negotiation and conflicts between the I-voices, so much as the positions and repositions from those. All these processes are consequence of the dynamic principle of self and enable a transformation of the concept of being in the world. Internal and external dialogues are continuously established, what results in new concepts and qualifies the training in PARFOR.

It was clear that the ambiguity is present in all the routine roles of the teachers-students' selves. As an example, the support voices can minimize or even silence the no support voices. On the other hand there are also moments, in which the no support voices cause or even are created by the self-critic process itself. Such behavior craves self-audiences to avoid that this process turns into a non-adaptive one and causes a self-placement of the I-position against the daily chores and the keeping of the formation process in PARFOR.

Besides it, the analyze also indicated that the training was able to modify the routine of the teachers-students and as consequence their relationships with outer others turned different too. As an example, because of the formation the time and the relationship with the husband and the children had changed for them. To deal with this new scenario they had to defend their will to continue in the formation and make self-consultancies to be sure of their choice from keep the training.

Given the revelations made by the teachers-students about the field of training, it can be seen that the dialogical processes between the I-positions are not easy, especially when it comes to finding motivation to follow through with the studies, notably to those teachers-students coming from the countryside (four). They described the difficulties faced along the way to the University, due to lack of regular transport, a situation that forces them to wake up at four in the morning to take care of their children, housework and to cook before go to the class. At that moment, their narratives explain a mix of pain and courage, attitudes that are stimulated from the external voices of support, that came from the family, colleagues, spouses and faith. These are internalized and can generate an internal mobilization to sustain resilient attitudes to face the difficulties.

In regards to the bad work conditions, exemplified by the terrible public transportations available to the university or the little to no necessary school material given to the teacher-students, some of the students take these responsibilities on themselves and go as far as taking money away from their own salary to buy the missing equipment or pay for room renovations. The matter is though neglected by the head of the program over the necessity to accomplish pedagogic results on the program.

So it was possible to conclude that even though the PARFOR training process changed the praxis of the teachers-students and made they think about the possibility to invest in new formations, that are many infrastructural and political problems in the Program, that should be attended from the head of PARFOR in order to improve the process of learning.

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