

Teacher education practices of an experienced teacher in an induction program: a case study^{1 2 3 4}

Práticas formativas de uma professora experiente num programa de indução: um estudo de caso

Prácticas de formación de una maestra experta en un programa de inducción: un estudio de caso

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Abstract

Considering the theoretical references on the teaching knowledge base, conversations between teachers, and the teacher's thoughts, we analyze the formative practice of an experienced teacher while acting as a mentor to a novice teacher in an induction program. We conducted a descriptive-analytical exploratory case study about the virtual interactions established between them. The analysis of the mentor's written narrative unveils her pedagogical reasoning through several formative actions related to the novice. The analysis of the mentor's written narratives revealed her pedagogical reasoning through several formative actions related to the novices' practices and the problems she faced. The reflective processes encouraged the mentee to look at her practice, design alternative ways of acting, and implement them

Keywords: Teacher educator, Professional experience, Teaching practices, Induction

Resumo

Considerando referências teóricas sobre a base de conhecimento para o ensino, conversas entre professores e pensamento do professor, analisam-se as práticas formativas de uma professora experiente, em sua atuação como mentora de uma professora iniciante em um programa de indução. Realizou-se um estudo de caso exploratório de natureza descritiva-analítica sobre interações virtuais estabelecidas entre elas. A análise de narrativas escritas dessa mentora revelou seu raciocínio pedagógico por meio de diversas ações formativas relacionadas à visualização das práticas e circunscrição dos problemas enfrentados pela iniciante. Desvelou, ainda, que a promoção de processos reflexivos incentivou a iniciante a olhar a própria prática, a projetar formas alternativas de atuação e a experimentá-las.

Palavras-chave: Formador de docentes, Experiência profissional, Prática docente, Indução

Resumen

Considerando las referencias teóricas sobre la base de conocimiento para la enseñanza, las conversaciones entre los maestros y el pensamiento del maestro, se analizan las prácticas de formación de una maestra experta, en su función de mentora de una maestra principiante, en un programa de inducción, se realizó un estudio de caso exploratorio descriptivo-analítico sobre las interacciones virtuales establecidas entre ellas. El análisis de las narrativas escritas de estas interacciones reveló el razonamiento pedagógico de la mentora a través de varias acciones de formación destinadas a visualizar las prácticas y circunscribir los problemas que enfrenta la principiante. También reveló que la promoción de procesos reflexivos motivaron a la principiante a mirar su propia práctica, diseñar formas alternativas de actuación y adoptar nuevas prácticas.

Palabras clave: Formador de docentes, Experiencia profesional, Práctica docente, Inducción

Introduction

The definition of teaching practices encompasses different meanings from the conceptual representation of the teachers' work in the classroom. We could describe those related to the management of problems in different spheres. Regardless of the semantic dispersion involved in the definitions used, it is essential to consider the relational character among teachers, students, and contents to be taught (Lampert, 2010), and the contexts they take place. In this study⁵, we understand that these practices are formative processes composed of mentors' intentional actions – derived from continuous processes of interpretation and decision-making–, towards the professional learning of novice teachers considering their formative demands.

The investigation of mentoring practices or induction guided towards the support of novice teachers (NT), enacted by experienced teachers after the specific formative process, is justified when considering that entering the profession is a period described as full of difficulties, dilemmas, fears, etc. to the new teachers (Marcelo & Vaillant, 2017).

Experienced teachers, those with more than 10 years of work in the classroom and who carry out other roles in different schools (Vaillant, 2014), have diversified repertoires and adequate training to support the novice ones to deal with the everyday demands in the classroom and school, helping them in their difficulties.

In the case of *Programa Híbrido de Mentoria* (PHM- Hybrid Mentoring Program), the research context of this study, experienced teachers acting as mentors (M) participated in a formative process led by researchers, to train them to help novice teachers. The formative process started before the mentoring and continued during the work of the novice ones through the adoption of a hybrid approach, which combines virtual and in-person actions, as well as the approximation of the university with the school, conceiving it as a privileged space of learning to teach. The hybrid character of the proposed study is also related to the creation of other spaces for teacher education because it demands from the university a "more balanced and dialectical relation between academic knowledge and professional practice" (Zeichner, 2010, p. 487). When supporting the learning of experienced teachers to act as mentors to novice ones, we consider the differences between *teaching* (to be a teacher) and

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teaching to teach (be a trainer) (Loughran, 2014), and the binarity or dichotomy between professional practical knowledge and academic knowledge, between theory and practice (Zeichner, 2010).

In the formative processes, we used references about learning and teachers' professional development, teacher education, pedagogical practices, a knowledge base for teaching, university-school relationship, and researchers-teachers, among others (Vaillant & Marcelo, 2015).

Problem and conceptual elements

We can consider processes of mentoring as an aid that encompasses a set of systematic and intentional activities, carried out by an experiment teacher, towards a novice one. Its key characteristic is conversation. In this case, the conversations involve teachers with different times of experience. It is up to the mentor to guide and promote processes to construct professional knowledge for the novice mentees (Tillema et al., 2015).

The use of reflexive conversations with mentors to guide novice teachers' critical analysis can result in the review of assumptions, teaching practices, and their impact on students' learning, for example. Mentors can promote teacher learning with the *help* of novice teachers to minimize or overcome the difficulties faced, fomenting processes of reflection about the practices, the identification, construction/development, and enactment of pertinent alternatives (Tillema et al., 2015). Therefore, they can incentivize novices to examine their practices, and make their actions and motives explicit to *see their world in a more organized manner*, from the identification of information, data, involved events, etc. (Fitzgerald & Palincsar, 2019), and what can be problematic in a certain situation (Loughran, 2014). In this process, we highlight the identification and examination – in the dyad mentor-mentee – of the process of pedagogical reasoning enacted by novices, so that they can experiment with intentional, planned, supervised, and reflected alternative practices (Gao et al., 2019).

To do so, the mentor must access several information about beginners' experiences. S/he should help them to make visible the pedagogical actions used and the necessary and indispensable base of knowledge for professional work that, in many cases, are tacitly presented (Keast et al., 2017). The knowledge base is composed of specific knowledge,

pedagogical knowledge, and the pedagogical knowledge of the content. The latter is exclusive to the teaching activity, which consists in transforming the specific knowledge into knowledge learned by students (Shulman, 1987). Pedagogical reasoning is a process in which teachers transform content-specific knowledge through pedagogical actions, resulting in students' learning. It refers to the thought and planning, carried out by teachers when organizing their lessons and teaching them, emphasizing the intellectual base for teaching, and the behaviors related to its implementation. Both, knowledge base and pedagogical reasoning, are some of the processes of learning to teach.

The literature about teachers' thought, which involves these two processes, illustrates that these types of tacit knowledge can become explicit. When indicating the reasons (thoughts) that ground teachers' actions, expertise, and complexity of teaching can be recognized and researched. Specifically, through the explanation of pedagogical reasoning, it is viable to broaden the answers to the *what* and *how* to teach (Loughran, 2014). The analysis of teaching practices allows, in the case of mentors and novice mentees, to relate and transform their specific experiences into conceptual notions, and theoretical proposals, building new knowledge on teaching (Orland-Barak & Mastik, 2017).

Objectives and methodology

Through an exploratory case study of descriptive-analytic nature, we aimed to analyze the mentoring practices used by an experienced teacher in her virtual training work guided towards a novice teacher, both acting in the early years of Elementary Education. This mentor was selected because she had had systematic interactions with NTL⁶ for approximately 2 years and a half. The mentor W. (MW⁷) is graduated in Pedagogy, and has 11 years of experience in the municipal system as an Elementary School teacher, early years, working as a Supervisor in PIBID (*Programa Institucional de Bolsas de Iniciação à Docência*- Institutional Program of Teaching Induction Grants) and was a teacher-pedagogical coordinator in the city. NTL graduated in Biological Sciences and Pedagogy. She works as a teacher in the early years and, when joining the PHM, she had four years of teaching experience.

⁶ To preserve the novice teacher's anonymity, in this article we call her NTL.

⁷ To preserve the mentor's identity, in this article we call her MW.

We have used content analysis of the narratives written by MW and NTL in documents, such as diaries, forums, and feedback that give context to understand the mentor's actions. These narratives are conceived as a research tool of participants' trajectories (in this case, M and NT) at PHM and as a device to improve the practices through the description of their actions, the promotion of reflexive processes, and the establishment of opportunities for professional learning. This perspective involves the study of what people say, think, and want to show about their thoughts and actions, and, not necessarily, what they think or do, i.e., refer to the study of their practical knowledge (Moreira, 2011).

We have selected *portions* of the ensemble of broader data (Little, 2003) composed of the virtual interactions between MW and NTL, based on the following criteria: representation of a situation in which we can identify the starting point; who were the participants, the processes involved, the unfoldings and end, what means that the focus of the excerpt was overcome. To delineate the selected portion, we considered that the situations described by NT pointed out difficulties, dilemmas, feelings, demands of support, etc.; and, in the case of M, the exchange of ideas, presentation of examples and analysis, questions, and demands of additional information. We also considered the mention or description of support received/offered, the occurrence of reflexive processes about the practices, the understandings manifested about teaching and teaching to teach, about being a mentor, being an NT, and the record of unfoldings shown by NT. There is no linear order in the dialogues between M and NT, one subject is discussed and later is changed to another. In the virtual exchange of information and conversation of PHM, other themes are frequently introduced by the NT and/or the M.

Practices of a mentor: from classroom knowledge to teaching how to teach

The data allow us to know in detail the mentoring practices related to one of the main phases of interactions between MW and NTL: the development or deepening of the mentoring process (Reali et al., 2010).

We have selected three portions of data related to the activities of *planning*, *activity adaptation*, and *textual review*, among others, carried out by NTL. In these segments, we have identified: the objectives established by the mentor together with the NTL; the ways she used to obtain relevant information to delimitate NT's difficulties; the joint analysis of the practices and the planning of work alternatives; the processes of following up the implementation of new practices; the use of reflexive tools and the representation of practices in the NT's learning opportunities. From the MW's work, we have identified information on the conceptual base of their practices and the pedagogical reasoning used.

First intervention: make the practices "visible" and circumscribe NT's problems

At PHM, 'teaching to teach' and the interactions between MW- NT L have as one of the starting points the presentation of the professional trajectory and the novice formation, mainly the first teaching experiences. In the initial conversations, MW sought information on NTL's work context, her students, and classroom routines. This data, together with the presentation and indication of NTL's teaching difficulties, defined the initial guide for MW's mentoring process.

From NTL's information, MW recorded in her diary some highlights from her preliminary evaluation to be resumed later: school planning and class plan, which were not undertaken; organization of weekly routine, and use of didactic material. Text review– not explicitly mentioned by NTL – was pointed out by MW as a priority, as it should have happened systematically in the 3rd Year to improve students' text writing. We suppose that part of her diagnosis was based on an excerpt of NTL's diary, in which she states:

The planning process is very lonely and it is hard for me to be practical and flexible. This year (...) there was a great shock with the reality I'm used to and the one I'm living in nowadays. (...) what I find in the weekly plan I'm used does not fit my class. Some things I can do and when I feel lost, I seek relief in it. (Diary NT L, April 16, 2018)

As an answer, MW proposed a task for NTL: to present a *weekly plan* of Portuguese, considering her experiences with the class. To guide her actions, she made some questions about the class dynamics: how the classes were carried out, collective, individual, in pairs and/or in groups; how the content was presented; if any activity demanded the adequate content or methodology; how many students participated, did not want to participate, or did not participate because had difficulties; which were the weekly objectives regarding Portuguese and if they were reached (or not); if faced difficulties and needed support; what the general plan way: if it had to be adapted to specific students; if the plan was fully implemented; if there were necessary modification; which were the weekly difficulties. At this moment, we can see that MW, by meticulously analyzing NTL, wanted to know her in detail (Fitzgerald & Palincsar, 2019) to delineate the problems to be managed (Loughran, 2014).

In her proposal, MW indicated the aim of the task: to reflect on the importance of *planning*. She asked for information that, when asked, could make NT's actions more visible to her and, simultaneously, be an opportunity for NTL to *analyze* her actions. By helping her to take a step back from the situation, and to observe in detail what happened in her classroom, MW incentivizes an analysis of the practices from a perspective different from the one NTL has during their implementation. By promoting a space for subsequent reflexive conversation, she incentivized NTL to identify, explain, and build new ideas— a preliminary step to delineate new practices (Gao et al., 2019; Keast et al., 2017), as can be seen in the answers to MW's questions:

the number of activities planned and the difficulty to focus on what was more important (...) the class I work with this year has a very different rhythm from the one I'm used to (...) I have students that have the maturity to be in the 3rd Year, but I also have those with a 1st or 2nd Year profile (...) I'm really frustrated that I cannot do half of what I plan for the week. It is difficult for me to be malleable towards what I have planned (...) I'm a bit stiff when it comes to the unforeseen. (Task 1.1)

When describing her class and how she perceived her student in general and difficulties, NTL unveiled her feelings and positions. She made it visible to MW (and to herself) that she could not implement the activities planned as she would like, by exposing her pedagogy to MW's evaluation (Loughran, 2014).

Introducing reflexive processes with NTL: from “seeing” to projecting and experiencing new forms of work

After, MW posed questions involving NT's work and her role in the circumstances reported. The mentor sought more information on NT's ideas and, by asking new questions, she could make NT identify and analyze more deeply her conceptions and practices, displacing her from the frustrated expectation towards a reflection on the action, identifying the actions that could favor children's learning (Fitzgerald & Palincsar, 2019). We can see that MW provoked investigative attitudes, associated with the process of pedagogical reasoning (Loughran, 2014) when asking:

What do you think about this? (...) do we need to have a weekly plan with lots of content and be able to fulfill the teaching plan, even if students are not following it? Or do we have a plan proposing content activities that will have a sequence and could be resumed when we think they are needed? (...) And mainly ways that can progress their learning, right? (*Feedback* to NT23/4/2018)

Later, she presented a suggestion with the explanations to her proposal, blended with comments on some actions carried out by NTL and an invitation to experiment with a different way to organize her routine and material.

You could create a weekly schedule that would be a model and you will only have to fill it (...) with the content (...) For example on Monday, you work with Portuguese and Mathematics, however, sometimes you work with writing, while others are reading and text interpretation (...) In the schedule [proposed by her] you establish what day you would work reading and interpretation and always do it in that day (...) you will then be able to always work with the same routine of activities and will not forget the contents. What do you think about this suggestion? We could build it together and if this helps you, you can implement it. Shall we try? (*Feedback* to NT, April 23, 2018)

In the same *feedback*, MW included the theme of *adequations* to be applied, gradually, in activities with the students who could read and write yet. The suggestion was followed by the support of the proposal and the close follow-up of NTL's actions through a forum in which both discussed the initiative. The detailing of the information offered by MW possibly favored

the NT's understanding and engagement in the teaching action at stake (Tillema et al., 2015), by highlighting the tasks related to the creation and use of a *weekly planner*,

We can also point out [in the planner] the moments the activities will be adapted to the illiterate students and how your organization will be (individual, in pairs, or in groups) considering the aim of the activity. About the adaptation of the activities, we can also think together about which activities will be adapted and how I can help with these adjustments. We could start with one activity in the week. What do you think? (...) we can continue to discuss this in the interaction forum, because this will have to happen weekly (...) Students have a certain resistance to working in pairs or groups, but this type of organization can help them, ease the intervention, and it is important to their learning. So, you should insist on the activities in pairs and groups. It will not be easy, but, certainly, time will make students change their behavior and learn to interact with their classmates. (*Feedback* to NT, April 23, 2018)

From the examples and reflections given by MW, in her answer, NTL focused on the *adaptation of activities*. This moment allowed NT to show her difficulties to manage the teaching process through self-evaluation and to detail her actions and the events in her class when trying to adapt to the activities. In her answer NTL considered that "it was really hard to clearly say what is my difficulty to adequate the activities because I can only think about the time" (NT diary April 27, 2018), showing the complexity of her difficulties, and her inability to identify the problem, which would be a key factor to overcome it (Loughran, 2014). When working according to the suggestion of MW, she analyzed the limited effect of her actions that confronted her understanding of professional commitment.

When I can draw and organize this standard pathway there is no time left to think about the students who do not follow this standard. It seems strange when I write and tell this to myself, because then comes the thought "what kind of teacher are you, who only knows how to reach the standard?" [original highlight] (NT Diary, April 27, 2018)

In her feedback, MW used words of empathy and understanding, and resumed the issue of *time*, indicating that this variable interferes with her teaching. Simultaneously, she highlighted her perspective of a good teacher, as the one who is always concerned with students' learning, and valuing NTL. She pointed out that NT's concerns represented her process to learn how to teach. At this moment, she associated the theme *planning* with that of

adjustments when indicating that, by first organizing, NT would be more clear about her purposes and, with the [previously proposed] schedule, she good reflect better on her *adaptations*.

One thing that distinguishes a good professional from an average one is this continuous concern that lingers over our pedagogical practice because we can only improve if we are aware that something is not good (... In your case you have this concern to adjust the activities, you are concerned with everyone's learning and this is something highly positive for your learning process as a teacher. The time to do it will arise when you can (...) reach the objectives proposed. By building a schedule you will have some time to reflect on the adjustments; in some cases, these will be done in the strategies or in the resources you will use. (*Feedback* 8 to NT, n.d)

Through reflexive *feedback*, MW sought to help NT clear her objectives (Tillema et al., 2015). The ways used by MW to '*teach how to teach*' were to incite NTL to tell, interpret, and problematize her world (Orland-Barack & Maskit, 2017) and glimpse the possibility of experiencing new practices. In her diary, she recorded that "from all the demands [presented by NT], the priority is how to make a (...) plan that fills students' needs and that can be executable" (MW, May 6, 2018), summarizing NTL's difficulties.

These ideas point to the relevance of defining a problem (Loughran, 2014) and the hierarchy of difficulties to be developed in the mentoring processes, which was gradually negotiated between MW –NTL. *MW's broad view* of what happened in NTL's classroom, from her pertinent questions, allowed NTL to understand her difficulties and to define together the mentoring actions.

The term *planning* was resumed by NTL who pointed out to MW what seemed to be a relevant practice to be learned and enacted after prioritizing what should be implemented. However, she seemed insecure and uncomfortable indicating the contents that should be taught and defining which materials to use in Portuguese.

Prioritize. This is the word whose action is extremely important when we wish to do our best, with no unnecessary suffering and reach a clear target. I didn't learn how to prioritize. Plan classes, to me, become, most of the time, a reason for great angst and suffering. I think this is because I cannot prioritize (...) it is my first time in the 3rd Year. I am not familiar with the contents and this increases a bit more my suffering. I'm always in doubt. (NTL Diary, May 13, 2018)

In her *feedback* MW, besides reporting to the core of NT's problems, illustrated how to manage classroom time, based on her teaching practice as an elementary teacher, mentioning what she believed to be convenient to do, thus, helping the novice to glimpse new work perspectives (Loughran, 2014).

the issue of time for each activity (...) can only be remedied through the organization and elaboration of strategies. In my work routines, I guide myself through the clock and the time I have stipulated for each activity; when I perceive that most could do it, I analyze if the time was adequate. Even if not everyone had finished I end the activity and give a bit more time (though timed). For a [text] production I use two Portuguese classes (that is, an hour/40 minutes) or sometimes I rely on the daily routine, this activity will go until recess or until P.E. (*Feedback* 12 to NT, n.d.)

Detailing her practices of time management of classroom activities, MW uses an example to, apparently, incentivize NT to use the involved actions and illustrated how the process of time adaption can be conducted, considering several resources/strategies used to teach different Portuguese contents.

I'll give some examples of how we can make adaptations that will help with the issue of time with the activities [targeting the illiterate students]. If the proposal of activity is individual (...) on the reading and text interpretation (...) During the rewriting you (...) When writing each paragraph (...). In this activity, the illiterate group (they could be in groups) can (...) The other will not be helped (and can be in productive pairs).

For those who can, you could also propose a rewrite or production (individually or in pairs) and provide a guided proposal for those with more difficulties (small groups). (*Feedback* 12 to NT, n.d.)

After, MW indicates an activity, aiming to provoke a reflection on how to make a weekly plan based on the schedule. She guided in detail the task to be carried out. This approach worked as a trigger for NTL, i.e., it has contributed to calling her attention to identify important aspects she had not perceived in her difficulty to deal with time in her classes. This could be seen in a comment from NT about the proposed task:

Thank you for the model you've sent. It helped a lot. It is interesting that while I was doing the exercise I realized that the time I have is, in fact, shorter than I imagined. The gate opens earlier for students' to leave earlier, as most students come from another neighborhood and leave by bus. Starting at 5 pm, I have to finish the class. (Activity 2.1. Schedule, May 13, 2018)

In her diary, MW analyzed the effects of the approach in which she offered models, guidelines, and detailed suggestions, guided by her work, and anticipated the next steps to propose to the NT. She analyzed her work as a trainer and showed her process of pedagogical reasoning (Shulman, 2015) in this case, which included considering NTL's comments on her difficulties, planned actions, and gaps indicated.

In the feedback of the activity, NTL indicated two points that hindered students' development, which I considered to be relevant: the first point (...) and the second was that NT will decrease the rhythm and value the quality and not the quantity. Thus, I considered that in this activity NTL (...). (...) In the forum, NTL reported that she was having problems with text review, because (...) I suggested to NT that she should report to me in the diary how was the work with text review in the first bimester. We talked in the forum (...) now is the moment to analyze how NTL carried out the activity and with which frequency (...) Faced with this, I proposed the activities for the week. (...) From these guidelines, NT would have to reformulate her schedule and planning (...) (MW Dairy, May 13, 2018)

After, MW asked NTL to record in her diary her reflections on the experience of creating and developing the activities proposed in the task about the *weekly plan organization*. In her answer, NTL, besides presenting a *new weekly plan*, analyzed its implementation from the statement of a task proposed by MW with questions that demanded not only an indication of details but also a deeper analysis of the theme. (Gao et al., 2019).

Task 2.3, presented by MW:

The objective of this activity is to make you reflect on the weekly routine experience with the new schedule.

Attach the weekly plan (...), write a reflexive report about the week, regarding the points previously raised as difficulties.

- How was the experience to plan following the schedule you created?
- Could you implement all the activities proposed in the planning? If not, why?
- Did the activities have an adequate time for all students to do them?
- Which changes do you think the schedule needs?
- Write about the points you consider to be relevant (Task 2.3)

NT's report indicated progress in the elaboration of the *weekly plan* and also in the critical analysis of her practices when mentioning the *lack of organization*, as she introduced an activity not previously foreseen (word dictation) that interfered in the proposed writing production and led her to give up to implement it, with no justification. Once more, she pointed out her difficulty to deal with the duration of the activities and reducing the offer of activities. She felt insecure, mainly because she had to teach all the content planned in the available time. She revealed her frailties, difficulties, dilemmas, and concerns, but pointed out that it was easier to do a weekly plan, showing a certain relief. Again, she defines a position – having a focus – that could help her overcome these adversities, though she suggested she did not how to prioritize her actions.

It was very hard to plan because I already knew the axes I wanted to work with. I only had to decide from where the activities would come (...) I was relieved because I could organize the week faster (...) On the issue of their text production, it was a lack of organization. I decided (I have this problem) to do a dictation of works and to write phrases, and then there was no time for writing. So that I didn't have to run over everything, I gave up the writing (...) This issue of time for the activities may be something more complicated for me. Because there is a group of students that can follow me, another that can't but are not that late, those who are a bit late, and those who can't do anything. (...) I think I still have problems reducing the number of activities to do. Then there is a certain agony when I look at the contents and see the short time to do everything. I lack focus. (NTL's answer, task 2.3)

In her diary about these new experiences proposed by MW, NTL showed she was seeking certainties and clearness regarding her learning. However, despite showing some anxiety because she considered she did not have the necessary school support, these aspects do not seem to immobilize her process of professional development. She repeated the importance of MW closeness and the examples presented to build new knowledge.

I feel I'm on the right path. Still starting the improvements I proposed myself, but in the process, on the way. This last week I could fulfill what I had planned, even with many doubts (...) the priorities were really necessary. Planning, in general, is a solitary process, but even more so this year, because I have only 3rd Year in the afternoon (...) and there is much confusion about adjusting the material to plan or the plan to the material. (...) I have no support in the weekly plan I create, so there were weeks that I planned day by day, not in advance. Today, I can finish what I planned for the next week (...) I can't always do this and what has helped me was to create a routine in my schedule and, to do that, I had the mentor's support (...) I think I can say that (...) the creation of a schedule/routine has been incorporated and overcome, but there are other remaining difficulties. The issue of prioritizing is one of them. Participating in this mentoring program has been really important (...) There are some things to which I'm closer now and examples to understand and do (...) But, even so, I'm moving towards improvement (...) I think I could define this week with the word: moving. (NTL diary, May 20, 2018)

Besides complimenting NT on her progress regarding planning, MW used in her feedback word of comfort and empathy regarding the difficulties pointed out and offered some suggestions. She highlighted the relevance of keeping her *eyes on the students*, after all, it is a measure of their learning that guarantees that the teacher is teaching. By acting this way, in her dialogue with NTL, NW emphasizes her perspective about a fundamental aspect of learning processes, students' learning, and reinforcing teachers' professionalism as an axis of teachers' role.

I was very happy with your testimony (...) I'm glad you can plan in advance your week. Congratulations on the improvement. However, some doubts and insecurities continue. This is very common when we are doing something new and don't have the support of someone who has already done this job (...) this reminds me of how I felt when I started teaching. We have this need to have feedback for everything we do so that we are sure about our path (...) Our work gives results in the day-to-day life and the learning (or not) of our students. (...) Keep calm, you will certainly know if what you are proposing to the students is adequate. By overcoming the planning, there will be enough time to start to analyze your classes and notice what is working and what needs to be improved (*Feedback* MW Record 11- NTL Diary, n.d)

Refining NT's work in four phases: the incentive for the reflexive processes to become an iterative practice

After, in her diary NTL pointed out the unfoldings of MW's guidelines in her practices but, despite the improvements, she signed that she was having difficulties: "of conducting workgroup in my classroom, they fight a lot with each other. This is also discouraging. But even so, I felt that I'm moving towards improvement" (NTL Diary, May 20, 2018).

In her answer MW, besides reflecting on the work in groups and pairs and giving examples of activities that could be implemented, reaffirmed the importance of using a diary so that NT could present the difficulties she faced and describe if the activities were successful or not. When mentioning the diary, she reinforced that this would be a way to understand the experiences that, when narrated, can be reaffirmed, updated, and transformed, confirming Clandinin and Connelly (2000). "This writing process makes us reflect and show new paths, as you have said yourself. It was through the task about the schedule that you realized you have less time in class than you thought" (Feedback MW record 11 to NT n.d.).

NTL wrote about *written production* and how they were related to the *adaptations* demanded by some of her students. When creating an analytical synthesis to answer MW, NTL reiterated her difficulties with the duration of the activity but indicated the unfoldings or the relations between what she intended to do and what was needed to reach the objectives

established. These findings make up the support to adopt new pedagogical actions, as shown below:

I thought it was difficult to organize myself better for the day of writing production. It is still difficult to organize the time for each activity because if I intend to have everyone following me, this will take longer. And, as it always happens, I have to take extra activities for the students that end up in the established time (...) Maybe I need more do more tests with work pairs, because I have students that definitely cannot produce in pairs, who hinders more than helps. I also have many absent students, I end up needing to change pairs at the last minute. I need to be able to create the production activity in advance so that I can ask for help to adapt it. What happens is that I normally do it on Sunday and, as I have text production on Tuesday there is no time to talk about adaptations. The persisting difficulties are related to the time of the activities, what to do with the students who cannot do them in time, prioritizing what is more important when there is no time, and adapting the activities (NTL Diary, June 3, 2018)

In a forum about this theme, MW offered to help NTL in the process of text review, explaining the difficulties listed and pointing out possible actions:

NTL: My problem [regarding text improvement] is to think of a gradual sequence of work, visualize the steps, and how I should work on each one in a way that makes sense (...) During the first bimester (...) but I don't know if was organized enough to do accurately the collective reviews of these rewritings. [In the reviews] I tried to focus on the strong orality marks, heavily present in the texts. However, I confess that I got nervous quickly because I saw that my interventions didn't seem to have worked. I couldn't make them understand simple elements of cohesion and coherence. I notice that for me it is very hard when I'm not clear on the steps I should take to reach where I want (...).

MW: The orality marks are directly related to cohesion and punctuation which they don't know yet. Therefore (...) From what they already know, you can present other punctuation signs with examples in texts. Present possibilities of cohesion connectives. Coherence is directly related to the understanding of paragraphs. But we can work these aspects in narrative genres. Do you know what will be the genre of the 3rd bimester? I think we can plan a didactic sequence and then think about these difficulties.

N TL: For the 3rd bimester, for writing, there are technical worksheets, comic strips, and comic books. For rewriting, we have legends. And also, starting August (...) I have a problem helping them understand the reason for a paragraph. (...) I'll need to organize myself with some anticipation for the 3rd bimester because I have activities for the reading project that will also need to be included in the routine. We'll have to work with (...) (Forum. June 04-08, 2018)

In her diary, MW analyzed the situation and asked for additional information about the difficulties pointed out by NT.

Analyzing NT's report I notice that she does not know what to do nor where to start. Because of that (...), the activity this week (...) aims to make NT reflect on how she does the activity (guidelines to production, interventions during the process, and analysis after the activities). (...) With this activity I'll learn a bit more about NT's class and how their text productions are; I'll have more subsidies to help NT because I'll be able to see the students' texts. (MW diary, June 10, 2018)

Seeking to broaden her knowledge about NT's practices and her students' text production (and rewriting), MW presented a new set of questions approaching different aspects of NT's action (Fitzgerald & Palincsar, 2019), such as: how the activity was proposed; how the division of the productions (collective, pairs, individual) took place; if they were done in pairs; if there was previous planning on the number of productions to be done individually, in pairs, or collectively; if the pairs organized were productive, among others. In her feedback on the task, MW commented on the points raised by NT and offered information, alternatives, and reflections on the positive points of the mentioned strategies. In the end, she incentivized NTL to *plan and implement a textual review*. She clarified her theoretical conceptions about some NT's actions, explaining them with comments about collective review, productive pair, the unfolding of didactic sequences, and how to deal with illiterate students. She stressed that the activities proposed should be understood by her and her students (Fitzgerald & Palincsar, 2019). We can see her expertise to carry out this type of activity and the conceptual base of the proposed actions (Keats et al., 2017).

Answering your question about our routine, it is not possible to give feedback to all students in the rewriting and production activities, that is why we have the proposal of collective review. In the collective review (...) we will be working with a necessity and a great number will have a feedback on their difficulty (...) What happens in the collective review needs to make sense to you and the students (...) it would be ideal if the productive pairs could always be the same in the bimester (if some student is absent, you can change) or if you notice a change in the level of writing hypotheses (...) The idea is not to have one student be the scribe of the other (...) in this proposal, in our everyday life, we end up paying more attention to the students with more difficulties and leave to the side those that have already reached the objects and, with our interactions, could advance more. These students will be able to have interventions if you can plan the moment of production or rewrite in two moments (...) It is important to have a didactic sequence of the genre for students to know the weekly routine (...) You need to instigate students to reflect about what they write, creating the habit of revising their texts before handing it (thinking on the spelling already studied in class). (...) I believe that the activity of initial review that you have tried to do had no result because the students are not used to revising their texts. Even if it is individual, they should focus only on one problem at a time, because it is complicated for them to understand the whole correction process. (...) The next activity proposed is for you (...) to think about when you will have enough time to talk, correct, and copy of the text revised by students. (*Feedback* MW, June 30, 2018)

After, MW proposed to NT a similar movement to the creation of a weekly plan for the practice of *text review*, that is, a reflexive practice in 4 stages. From the (1st) detailing of a previous class, students' behavior, and what the teacher did for them to reflect on the review activity; (2nd) plan another; (3rd) implement it; and (4th) the analysis of the effects of this experience.

Select a text from the previous week (attach a photo of the text); correct it and leave only the problem to be focused on (...) Make a poster with the text or excerpt of the text (attach the photo of the poster). Describe in detail your class about text review, the way you approached the activity, what contributions students brought to the activity, and which were your questions to make students reflect on the problem. After the activity, analyze how the class was. Remember that only a review is not enough to evaluate the efficiency of the activity, we have good results after some reviews. (Statement Task 3.3)

Based on the three stages of enacting the new text review suggested, NT described how the activity of reviewing a rewriting took place.

The text review I chose to report was a fable (...) my proposal was to try to make students reflect on orality traces. They often write "and", "and so", "so". I chose a rewrite in pairs and just needed to correct other mistakes to focus on what I wanted. I reproduced the rewriting on a poster and taped it on the blackboard. I explained to students we would read a text that a pair had written and they would help me to substitute the terms "and so" and "so", for other words. As I was reading, some students who already write better also gave suggestions on punctuation and change of paragraphs. I considered them valid suggestions and did the suggested changes. I felt I needed to write on the board the possible connectives, so they could see how to substitute them, then, for instance, I wrote, "but", "however", "then", "when". I was rewriting on the blackboard while we did the modifications. It was very interesting because it helped me reflect on the differences between what we say and what we write, and what works only in speech and cannot be used in writing. I should (...) have used these activities that help reflect on orality, maybe today they would be writing better. However, I could not plan it correctly. (NTL answer to Task 3.3. June 24, 2018)

When analyzing the production presented by NTL on the activity about text review, it is clear her proposal, practices, and decision processes, followed by her reasons and students' answers. In the end, due to the perceived difficulties, she analyzed the previous actions and the current unfoldings. We can say that, besides making her practices more visible to herself and the mentor, NT examined the practices adopted and described the process of pedagogical reasoning involved in the described situation. She was not limited to judging and pointed out a hypothesis about how her work should have been initially carried out and the possible results on students' learning.

In her *feedback*, when resuming some aspects mentioned by NTL, besides highlighting the objectives targeted with the proposal of a new activity and the progress reached, MW established connections between her actions and the learning of her students and presented ideas that could broaden the meaning of some of these practices to NTL (Fitzgerald & Palincsar, 2019).

Through the description of your review activity, I believe you have conducted well the activity. You gave examples of connectives; you gave students the possibility to improve vocabulary. Well done (...) The activity aimed to make you reflect on how you implemented the activity, and how you planned and developed it. Thus, you will be able to see the importance of a sequence, so we advance students' texts.

I have already noticed a growth in your autonomy and planning. The changes reported in the next activity were quite positive for your pedagogical practice and your students' learning (*Feedback* to WTL, Task 3.3. June 30, 2018)

Considering the end of the first semester, MW asked NTL to take stock of the mentoring process in that period, who, through a movement to look back and forward, concluded:

The semester was very productive. There were many challenges and learning. I'm struggling a lot in my first time teaching the 3rd Year, mainly because I have a class with students that have some difficulties. I feel I overcame some obstacles, such as the challenge to organize a more adequate schedule and organize better the everyday class routines, but I still have many others to overcome. My focus now is to follow a sequence to work with text improvement, this is what I wish to learn how to do well and well-planned (...) I also hope I can organize better the routine of activities with productive pairs and, then, be able to help closer my illiterate students and those that know how to read and write few words. (...) next semester, I think it will be interesting to continue to work on text improvement, mainly the question of review and the attempt to work with productive pairs. (NT's answer. Task 3.4, June 24, 2018)

In her feedback, MW made some remarks about PHM, and her work as a mentor, and seemed happy with NT's positive evaluation.

I'm glad that PHM has been contributing to your reflections and the improvement of your pedagogical practice because this is exactly our proposal (...) My focus is to make you feel more autonomous and prioritize what you consider most important to be able to do a meaningful job to you and your students (*Feedback* to Diary 15, 16, 17 of NTL June 30, 2018)

Final remarks

In this study, it was possible to know the pedagogical practices used by a mentor (M) when following one of the NTs, from the interactions recorded through written narratives in a virtual environment. We could see that the mentor has diversified the strategies based on the NT's actions and testimonies, pointing out a work focused on the information received and the demands identified (Lampert, 2010).

Despite the limitation of a case study, we have observed in the *portion of data* analyzed a series of interactions that, in different stages, indicated specific aspects regarding the mentoring practices used by the mentor (M). During the conversations between M-NT, the process of *teaching how to teach* took place through some actions: questioning, exemplification, arguing, detailing procedures, establishing connections, suggesting, and praising.

This process involved several purposes during this time, not explicitly expressed by M, in the following sequence: enable NT's practices and circumscribe the problems faced by her; promote reflexive processes with NT, incentivizing her to see in detail her practice and to project alternative forms to work; and, later, to invest in the consolidation of actions derived from previous learning and focus on the reflected experience of new practices. In the mentoring process, though M used different formative strategies and tools, the promotion of reflexive processes was essential, when becoming iterative, i.e., focusing on the refinement/improvement of NT's work. In this case, we have noticed a dynamic in four stages: from a detailed analysis of previous actions, plan another improved action to substitute it, apply this alternative/new practice, and analyze the effects of this experience recorded through written narratives, establishing, as a derivation, new opportunities for NTL' learning.

M's position regarding the treated themes could be identified, as well as her knowledge about teaching. In this case, through the records, besides the objects and procedures used by her in the mentoring process, it was possible to know her processes of pedagogical reasoning, by explaining, in detail, the justifications and the different phases involved in the conversations she kept with NTL. It was also evident, in the case studied, that the mentor's empathic and understanding position towards her teaching work, faced NT's difficulties, which might have helped to maintain the interactions.

MW's interventions also included the precise indication of purposes established and the detailing of actions suggested, which allowed NT to look at her practice and develop a critical, open, and safe analysis to build and experience new practices. These interactions illustrate how much a process of systematic and frequent actions, continuous and long-lasting joint radical analysis between a novice teacher and a mentor, or the reflection of practices, can make explicit the difficulties, practical knowledge, thoughts, feelings, and professional learning of beginner teachers.

A look over the formative guidance carried out by the mentors, their actions, and the characteristics of PHM point out the relevance of a systematic and individualized follow-up of teachers at the beginning of their careers. The use of written narratives expanded the reflexive process and created opportunities for professional learning that would be invisible if other types of records, such as classroom observation or interviews, were used. We understand that the results can help ground proposals to support novice teachers through induction and mentoring programs, showing the possibilities of professional learning from the promotion of new opportunities. The systematized and organized conversations, through written narratives established by a mentor and a novice teacher, are an example. The knowledge resulting from this study can offer subsidies to teacher training in general and, in particular, to their trainers.

Finally, we highlight the importance of broadening this type of investigation to deepen the knowledge about the conversations between teachers with different levels of experience about the development of pedagogical practices and processes involved.

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