



The Informal Partnerships and the Teacher Professional Development in Higher Education

Glaucia Muñoz dos Reis¹  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6314-7187>

Maria de Fátima Ramos de Andrade²  <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4945-8752>

^{1,2} Universidade Presbiteriana Mackenzie

ABSTRACT

The present study had the objective to analyze in what ways informal partnerships collaborate in the professional development of educators in the university context. The search for this understanding leads us to the following questions: What informal partnership contributions collaborate in the professional development in the mobilization of knowledge? Are these partnerships present in the university culture? Based on studies that deal with teacher education for researching, we have chosen a qualitative study through semi-structured interview applications with nine professors from the Pedagogy course of four universities. We have verified that informal and affinity partnerships have influenced, in a preponderant way, personal and professional development, supplying material and immaterial exchanges, new ways of working, new perspectives from the teacher partner's perception.

KEYWORDS

Professional teacher development. Informal partnership. Higher education.

Corresponding to Author

¹ Glaucia Muñoz dos Reis

E-mail: Munhoz@uol.com.br

Universidade Presbiteriana Mackenzie,
Brasil

CV Lattes

<http://lattes.cnpq.br/7609150430741791>

Submitted: 10 Feb 2019

Accepted: 31 Mar 2019

Published: 04 Sept 2019

 10.20396/riesup.v6i0.8654609

e-location: e020003

ISSN 2446-9424

Checagem Antiplágio



Distribuído sobre



As Parcerias Informais e o Desenvolvimento Profissional Docente no Ensino Superior

RESUMO

O presente estudo teve como objetivo analisar como as parcerias informais, no contexto da universidade, colaboram no desenvolvimento profissional dos docentes. Na busca desse entendimento, partimos das seguintes questões: Que contribuições das parcerias informais, na mobilização dos saberes, colaboram no desenvolvimento profissional? Estão essas parcerias presentes na cultura universitária? Apoiadas em estudos que tratam da formação docente para a realização da investigação, optamos por um estudo qualitativo por meio da aplicação de entrevistas semiestruturadas com nove professores do curso de Pedagogia de quatro universidades. Constatamos que as parcerias informais e por afinidade têm influenciado, de maneira preponderante, o desenvolvimento pessoal e profissional, trazendo trocas materiais e imateriais, novas maneiras de se trabalhar, novos olhares a partir da percepção do parceiro docente.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Desenvolvimento profissional docente. Parceria informal. Ensino superior.

Asociaciones Informales y el Desarrollo Profesional Docente en la Enseñanza Superior

RESUMEN

El presente estudio tuvo como objetivo analizar cómo las asociaciones informales, en el contexto de la universidad, colaboran en el desarrollo profesional de los docentes. En la búsqueda de ese entendimiento, partimos de las siguientes cuestiones: ¿Qué contribuciones las asociaciones informales, en la movilización de los saberes, colaboran en el desarrollo profesional? ¿Están estas asociaciones presentes en la cultura universitaria? Apoyados en estudios que tratan de la formación docente para la realización de la investigación, optamos por un estudio cualitativo por medio de la aplicación de entrevistas semiestruturadas con nueve profesores del curso de Pedagogía de cuatro universidades. Constatamos que las alianzas informales y por afinidad han influido, de manera preponderante, el desarrollo personal y profesional, trayendo intercambios materiales e inmateriales, nuevas maneras de trabajar, nuevas miradas a partir de la percepción del socio docente.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Desarrollo profesional docente. Asociación informal. Enseñanza superior.

Aiming at a teachers' training and integration some educational institutions, both elementary and university set up a few days at the beginning of the semester, or throughout the year, for meetings and lectures, as well as for courses. Although those moments of conversation and planning are important, sometimes the environment is not propitious, and time is not enough to permit the professional to express himself in a free and natural way before his colleagues.

We understand teaching not as a natural gift, but as a profession, that requires qualification and professional development. Such a need for training could be supplied through collaboration and partnerships. Based on this premise, the theme of the present article is the teacher professional development amid a collaborative and informal partnership in an affinity context and knowledge exchange. Firstly, we have considered the informal partnership contributions intended for teacher professional development. Secondly, we show how the research was carried out and, finally, we point out some considerations.

Informal Partnership Contributions to Teacher Professional Development

The teacher, throughout his career, builds his professional identity and grows personally and professionally as he accomplishes his work and seizes the experiences that produce learning.

Based on Larrosa (2015), we understand that experience is what "occurs to us or happens to us" and that even if two, three or a group of teachers live moments in common, each one takes the experience as something personal, private, singular. "The event is common, but the experience is for each one his own, singular and, somehow, impossible to be repeated" (p.32). Each of those experiences might help with his personal and professional development. According to the author, "only the subject of experience is, therefore, open to his own transformation." He, who ventures into the crossing of experience, exposes himself to risks and bad weather, just as a pirate ventures into the sea.

Thus, the author defines the experience and its subject:

The subject of experience has something of a fascinating being that is exposed through an indeterminate and dangerous space, placing himself to be tested and searching for its opportunity, its occasion... In both Germanic and Latin languages, the word experience contains, inseparably, the dimension of crossing and danger (p.15).

This experience within the profession, even if it is singular and individual in its implications and private results, is likely to be experienced together with other school professionals and, why not, university professionals.

Regarding the experiences, Vaillant and Marcelo (2012, p. 40) refer to Dewey's thought that not all experiences bring learning, as they can be obstacles, and in order to happen real learning:

[...] what is important is the quality of the experience. In order to have quality in practical experiences, at least three principles should be adopted: continuity,

interaction, and reflection... Experiences must represent not only cognitive development but also a personal and moral development [...] if we learn from experience, it is because we reflect, analyze what we do and why we do it, which leads us to become aware of the complexities of the professional work.

According to the authors, in order to have quality experiences, it is essential to think about them, to give them continuity or not, and - if they are valid - to repeat them. In moments whose demands exceed our ability to respond, we can count on a friend's experience as he gives us cognitive and emotional support.

Thurler (2002) says that the experiences that occur in the school practices are not enough written, described and analyzed. Teachers are not enough called to share their new knowledge:

[...] because teachers do not want to admit that they can learn from each other because they are not willing to recognize each other's competencies ... Most schools have no experience when it comes to sharing knowledge and living experiences; they do not know how to do a systematic survey of data, nor to take advantage of their experiences. (2002, p. 82)

Perhaps it can be done in an informal way: from shared experiences, provide enrichment and knowledge reconstruction, in order to offer the professional teacher, the necessary development for the exercise of the profession; counting on the support of peers, not only to share knowledge, but also to talk about their own mistakes, and their own uncertainties. In the environment of sharing and dialogue in which professionalism is built, the teacher becomes aware of his abilities and limitations, which will reflect in his teaching practice. We can infer that the daily construction and reconstruction of what we are requires stopping to listen, and to dialogue with our peers. Stopping to re-evaluate our practices, relating them to the theory and searching alternatives to enrich and strengthen our professional development. Since we are social subjects, the other, who sees us from the outside and often brings light and helps us in the professional walk, can stimulate the changing of practices or its maintenance.

According to Fullan and Hargreaves (2000), there are situations in the school environment - and we can infer that they may also exist in the university atmosphere - that raise the walls of individualism:

Teachers are afraid of sharing their ideas and successes to prevent someone from "stealing" them and, doing so, assume their credit; beginners or experienced teachers do not ask for help so they do not appear incompetent; they always use the same method, even if they do not get positive results. Those people limit growth and improvement: "because they limit access to ideas and practices that could offer more efficient ways of doing things. They institutionalize individualism "(p. 58).

Individuality is important for professional development, as Fullan and Hargreaves (2000, p.25) pointed out: "isolation, personal development, and individual creativity are essential. Determining his own attitude related to improvement is as important as deciding on collective reactions" but fighting the "habitus" of individualism is also necessary, as the educational environment itself demands the exchange and the communication in pursuit of community growth. The authors think that group and individual strength are necessary for the

development of both: "We need to experience and discover better ways of cooperative work that activate group power while strengthening individual development."

The quotidian tasks developed in the educational environment involve interactions with students, other agents, especially their peers. These actions are governed by norms and rules, but also, they require the teacher to know how to act in an improvised, private and singular way. Daily routines and, space and time control do not exhaust the reality of daily interactions, which demand improvisation and adaptations to changeable situations.

As Pérez-Gomez (2001) states, teacher isolation may cause uncritical thinking, accommodation to the dominant system, and the inability to communicate ideas, didactic resources, and peer support. Healthy autonomy respects diversity, but it does not isolate itself:

The teacher professional autonomy and the search for his unique identity obviously presuppose the respect for differences and for the diversity stimulation in theoretical conceptions and in professional practices as an inescapable condition of the creative development of individuals and groups of teachers.] (PÉREZ-GÓMEZ, 2001, p.169).

In higher education, the available time and the individualist culture may cause difficulty to the sharing, as states Pimenta and Anastasiou (2002, p. 113):

Thinking collectively on what is done is to enter in the circle, to get acquainted, to self-expose - which we do with great difficulty, for being teachers of higher education, we are used to processes of planning, execution and evaluation of activities in an individual, individualistic and solitary way. Overcoming this form of action is procedural: in the experience, the group creates bonds and takes firm stands.

We believe that in a world where companies have already discovered that collaborative teamwork leads to better results by altering the architecture and logistics of their work environments, the university not always encourage the professors to meet in order to think collectively on their practices, to improve their skills and community spirit. Although there is spatial isolation, it is not the main obstacle for the meeting.

Fullan and Hargreaves (2000, p. 59) state that "two of the main causes of teacher individualism are not material; they are based on the norms and traditional conditions of teaching". Collaboration has been pointed out as a parameter for improvement in teaching/learning and for the very development of school and teachers' work:

Collaboration is one of the themes that, in recent years, has been most frequently referred to in the field of education, being associated with the teaching and learning quality improvement and to the school development. Thus, it arises in terms of both political discourse and research, as one of the crucial dimensions for solving the problems of education and for improving the work of schools and teachers (p.59).

The authors emphasize collaboration in a period of history in which changes are continuous, with several requirements and expectations. It is demanded from the teacher more knowledge of his area and of others'. With the advancement of technology, present in the school and the university environment, the teacher needs to acquire new knowledge in order to work with technological tools that support teaching.

The teaching culture, permeated by the collaborative spirit, aims to respect divergent opinions, individuality, and diversity. When encouraged, not imposed, it generates

spontaneity among peers, and exchanges of experience and knowledge become more intimate and truthful. When there is sharing in an atmosphere of affection and acceptance, we are not afraid of exposing ideas or receiving criticism, because we understand that everything is done longing for collaboration, for the growth of both sides, and not for the purpose of competition, in which only one side wins. "The culture of collaboration is the basic intellectual and effective substrate to face the uncertainty and risk of failure" (PÉREZ-GÓMEZ, 2001, 174).

Concerning the context of mutual and collaborative learning in the school, we can quote some highlights by Mizukami (2013, p. 24):

[...] the individual and collective character of such learning; [...] the importance of building learning communities that enable professional development; the importance of non-invasive collaborative processes for individual and collective development; schools as organizations that learn from the learning of their participants.

Teamwork and peer cooperation are ways of achieving the proposed goals and targets, and competition in the workplace has been replaced by cooperation. Every day, new skills and competencies are required, new roles and positions arise to contemplate those professional changes. It is necessary, then, to prepare for the work with the new generations of students. Some authors point out that learning inside organizations can happen in several ways: formal or informal, individual or collective; one does not exclude the other, but they are complementary. Could this time for sharing be manifested in an informal way?

Freire (1996, p. 19) demands our attention to learning in an informal atmosphere that is not generally linked to knowledge of the contents, or to the "teachable" aspect of education. He refers to gestures that carry meanings:

In fact, it goes unnoticed to us that it was socially learning that women and men, historically, have discovered that it is possible to teach. If it were clear to us that it was learning that we realized we could teach, we would have easily understood the importance of informal experiences on the streets, squares, in the work, in the school classrooms, in playgrounds.

This learning, according to the author, is a common occurrence in the course of our history, and it shapes us. It happens with the teacher who learns and teaches his peers, through exchanges of knowledge, in an informal environment, either in the classroom, in the hallways, in the teachers' room or in the break, with a moment for some "coffee", in festive gatherings, lunches, trips and other opportunities. Fullan and Hargreaves (2000, p. 67) emphasize informality in the culture of collaboration:

Collaborative cultures can be found everywhere in school life: in gestures, playing and looks that signal sympathy and understanding; in heavy and difficult work and in self-interest which is evidenced in the corridors or outside the classroom; in birthdays, holidays, or other simple celebrations; in the acceptance and mixing of personal lives with professional lives; in a frank and open praise, in withdrawing, in gratitude and sharing and in a discussing of ideas and resources.

Whatever the environment - formal or informal - it is not easy to work in groups, especially when opposing positions and goals appear, in which the individual aspects of personality and temperament are present. In a research on teacher learning in collaboration with colleagues, Forte and Flores (2009) present Little's conception (1990) of school

relationships and their degrees of integration, intensity and interdependence, ranging from "sporadic and informal exchanges", "Mutual help and support", "routine and inconsequential sharing of materials and methods or open exchange of ideas and opinions", and finally, "cooperative work". The first three, she classifies as "weak forms of collegiality" and they do not directly interfere with her conceptions about practices. The greatest emphasis is on working together:

[...] group work for meetings based on shared responsibility of the work of teaching (interdependence), collective conceptions of autonomy, support for teachers' initiative and leadership in professional practice and group affiliations that are based on professional work (LITTLE, 1990, p. 519 as cited in FORTES and FLORES, 2009, 770-771).

Fortes and Flores (2009) point out that, according to Little (1990), working together implies greater interdependence and exchanges with responsibility for practice, autonomy, and professional development.

Little (1990, p. 510) points out that "[...] any interaction that breaks the isolation of teachers will in some way contribute to the knowledge, skill, judgment or commitment that individuals bring to their work." We believe that the expression "any interaction" incorporates the three aspects of collegiality mentioned by the author and can, surely, lead to teaching practices changes and questionings, even if such exchanges occur sporadically, informally, in exchanges of ideas and opinions.

Thus, we can infer that the teacher who proposes to listen to his colleague and to learn from the other grows every day. It is difficult to know if this exchange also commonly occurs among the "more experienced" teachers who, because of their long experience, may become insensitive to the opportunities to listen and learn from "younger and more inexperienced" teachers.

This "listening to the other" is not a sign of incapacity or insecurity. On the contrary, it is the maturity and the "knowing that I know nothing". Borrowing "the speech" from Freire (1996, p.51): "My safety is based on the knowledge confirmed by the experience itself, that if my "inconclusion", of which I am conscious, attests, on the one hand, my ignorance, it opens me, on the other hand, the way to know ". When the teacher notices his "inconclusion," he will probably stop to listen, stop to ask for the help, the opinion, and the suggestion that can make a difference in his daily practice. And so, he will permanently say as Freire (1996, p. 51): "I feel safe because there is no reason to be ashamed of not knowing something. Witnessing the opening to others, the curious availability to life, to its challenges, is necessary knowledge to the educational practice ".

Among other notes, Loponte (2009, p. 934-936) highlights aspects of periodic meetings of an informal group formed by Art teachers in basic education, who have developed strong bonds of friendship:

In recent years, our monthly meetings have not been tied to any extension courses, and we formed a study group without the need for a certificate of completion [...]. Friendships are not compulsory, they are choices, and they are singular ethical

choices. This is the feature of the group, far from the bureaucratic prescriptions and obligations that often characterize school meetings.

[...]. There is still much to learn from the friendships that challenge, instigate, provoke us (in distance and closeness) to be different in a society that constantly imposes on us ways of being.

In sharing experiences, the teacher thinks on probable changes in his concepts and practices, in the same way, that he allows the permanence of the efficient know/make to the professional development of teachers: "In this teacher friendship network, we have discovered that there are true paths, built from ways and byways followed individually and recreated when shared "(LOPONTE, 2009, p.932).

Briefly, the informal and friendly environment provides the freedom of expression, the sharing of hits and the acceptance of failures, even when it is not easy admitting and acknowledging them. Thinking on one's own practice or the other's practice, with a partner's help, also teaching the same discipline or another, can lead to changes in practice and professional development.

The Context of the Research: Listening to the Subjects

As an instrument of data collection, we conducted semi-structured interviews that enabled teachers to be free in their responses as they were able to emphasize those aspects that they believe are more important, without being induced to the answers. Five questions were asked in the same order. The first dealt with the relationship between collaborative work and professional teacher development; the second, with the intention of identifying whether informal partnerships were present in university culture; the third to know how partnerships are formed; the fourth to investigate what was shared and, the last question was how it helped to think about the practice.

After some responses, the interviewer intervened for complementing or for a more detailed explanation. We seek the meaning of the teachers' "speech" in the context, as detailed by Ghedin and Franco (2008, p.159): "The understanding of the meaning occurs in the context; in fact, any discourse that wants to express and expresses some particular object, or the real as a whole, is always situated in a determined and historically conditioned context."

After analyzing the content, we have realized that informal partnerships, in collaborative work, provide a careful look at the other and at themselves, and impel both professional development and generating changes in thinking the educational process and practice in the classroom. We have, thus, three categories: collaborative work and professional, and personal development; collaborative cultures and the teacher's initiative; learning with each other and changes in educational practice.

The Profile of the Interviewees: Choosing the Research Subjects

The subjects of the research were chosen according to criteria pre-established by us: teachers who have colleagues with whom they share knowledge in a collaborative and informal way in the area of education, more specifically, in Pedagogy. Nine professors from four universities¹ were interviewed; five of whom work in postgraduate courses as well.

Succinctly, we have found that the majority of participants are in the age group from forty to sixty years old; time of teaching, from twenty-one to thirty years or more, therefore with experience in teaching; time in the current institution from six to ten years or more, consequently, having an opinion about it as they know the institution well; all with graduation in the areas of humanities, mainly in Pedagogy, and also being all teachers of the Pedagogy course, teaching, most of them, in private universities.

To analyze the collected data, we have used the content analysis procedure. We have taken the meaning of the words from the messages, as pointed out by Chizzotti (2006, p.98): "The object of content analysis is to critically understand the meaning of communications, its manifest or latent content, the explicit or hidden meanings."

We have used letters to identify the subjects of the research, according to the chronological order of the interviews; we also have used letters for the names of people and institutions they referred to, in order to omit identities

Collaborative Work, and Professional and Personal Development

When questioned about the importance of collaborative work for professional development, the teachers talked about the importance of exchanges of knowledge and collaboration for the construction of knowledge. They also stressed that this collaboration is part of continuing education, adding personal and professional growth. We can confirm those with some of the answers:

I believe it is mainly our training as a professional. Both as professional and personal [...], adding both personal knowledge; personal as well as professional growth. (Prof. A)

[...] I start from the assumption that for the construction of knowledge [...], I can only apprehend that all professional development depends on collaborative work, a work that is done in partnership; works that are made from exchanges, from sharing. (Prof. B)

[...] What exactly is the teacher's search for another, for a colleague, for a partner of the area, trying ... huh ... completing what he has as a knowledge domain. (Prof. E)

Imbernón (2000, p.49), when referring to the construction of pedagogical knowledge in the teaching profession, points to the individual and collective aspects: "consists in discovering, organizing, founding, revising and building theory. [...], the professional of education is a constructor of pedagogical knowledge in an individual and a collective way".

¹ Before responding to the proposed questions, the interviewees signed a written informed consent form.

This constructive process appears in the subjects' responses, in words like formation, aggregation, construction, building, completing, and bringing growth.

Collaboration is present to support teachers, who coexist with the constant changes in society, which directly reflect on education. The teacher approaches the educational process as not being stagnated: it always changes. We can say that it is always under construction:

It is an area that is constantly in transformation, that you have your own perception of education as a technology, and not as something that is put, which is given and, therefore, does not change. When you think of the educational process as something in the rotation, in my understanding, there is no such thing as thinking without being in a collaborative way. (Prof. D)

We have seen that the broadening of different looks, perceptions, and experiences make the work richer. They nourish, feed, form and can be perceived in the following speeches:

Each professional comes from an area, from a formation, from a different perception, and it nourishes you, feeds you, and forms you related to the continuing formation. (Prof. D)

[...] considering that knowledge is multiple ... huh ... it is not divided ... so the more glances you have, the richer the work is, and the experience of each one is also very interesting; amplifies much anything that can be done, when it is done by several hands. (Prof. F)

In addition to the exchange of experiences, starting even from different formations, from different points of view. (Prof. H)

Another aspect brought by the research subjects concerns the exchange of ideas and strategies among colleagues in the profession. Those exchanges contribute to a different or complementary look at the content, pedagogical practices and several situations in the classroom. Both consensus and divergent opinions contribute:

When you exchange ... Ah, did you watch that movie? No? Ah, you must, it is interesting ... that is all, and we take it to class later. Therefore, there is this atmosphere for you to do, so to speak, in a freer way, but that is also important to be thought of as a profession ... thought collectively, not like every teacher in his classroom, totally separate. (Prof. D)

[...] to complete what he has as a knowledge domain, trying to have a thought, an opinion and even a guess about the strategies, about the teaching practices that he intends to carry out, also in thought, in comment, on the situations of classroom, situations, even occurrences, relationships with students, with the student individually, with the groups. (Prof. E)

I recognize this collaboration, this importance, in the sum, in experiences that we exchange, in different observations, divergent, in consensus, in everything that you can count on. (Prof. H)

Prof. H refers to the fact that there are sum, exchange, and consensus; however, he points out that even the different and divergent observations are part of the collaborative process and that they contribute to it as well. In a group with common goals, not everyone necessarily needs to agree on everything; on the contrary, different aspects and visions lead us to think of the process and, perhaps, seek other means to achieve them. The term "reflex instrument", used by teacher C in the excerpt below, is, according to him, referring to the role

of the coordinator that exists in basic education, due to the frequency of the meetings. In higher education, it is rarer, and it becomes more difficult to have someone to talk to, someone in whom we see our own problems and questionings reflected. In short, a partner, a peer, an equal who is sometimes absent. As the coordinator "mirror" is not present, the teacher creates an atmosphere, an environment and searches among peers for this exchange that leads him to "speak, listen to himself, think and evaluate":

I insist a lot on graduation ... when we now discuss the role of the coordinator. It is important that the coordinator is the mirror, in the sense of being an instrument of reflection, that you could see yourself [...] the teacher ends up creating a situation and the exchange happens, it is systematic; someone that you can see yourself, that you can talk to, that you can when speaking hear yourself, and reflect and evaluate. (Prof. C).

On the other hand, teachers D - "thought collectively" - and E - "trying to have a thought" - speak of thinking as being aware and moving to action. In this sense, thinking about practice tends to generate changes as the professional seeks to perfect his strategies in order to achieve the goals. When his practice has not shown the desired effect in the teaching/learning process, he usually seeks to modify it for that purpose.

Prof. G expresses the thinking on the practice, and the formation linked to it when he answered the fourth question: Thinking on his action with a class of students, and through what they talked, has changed his way of listening to them. Freire (1996, p. 43) comments on that listen to the other: "Even when, necessarily, he speaks against the positions or conceptions of the other, he speaks with him as a subject of the listening to his critical speech and not as the object of his discourse":

And it is super interesting because I've lived that experience in the group, wow, I remember so much ... when we open ourselves to the students. I remember a group of students who said that when they asked me something, my body was ... (the interviewee made a movement of lowering her shoulders and frowning in apparent dismay), my body movement inhibited this question relationship. So, you see that the body is present while ... what your listening to a student's complaint is, a student's question. So, I think I bring that as an example, and that made me grow a lot. I am much more trying to figure out what my move is. How I listen to a question that ... from the place I am talking, it may sound silly, but the student is super significant, he is very important. What is my listening? So, I feel that professional growth comes from something that comes from what I call a thoughtful teacher, who thinks of his own practice. I think, of course, we might be sitting, anchored in years of experience, but each class is a new class and it brings new challenges. (Prof. G)

The expression used by Prof. G, in which, even though it is "anchored in years of experience," each new experience with different classes should lead the teacher to a reflection on practice and change in the way of acting, if appropriate. Freire (1996, p. 21) states: "As a critical teacher, I am a responsible 'adventurer', predisposed to change, to accept the differences. Nothing that I have experienced in my teaching activity must necessarily repeat itself." As Prof. G states: "Each class is a new class and brings new challenges." Larrosa (2015, p. 28) states the aspect of the subject being sensitive to experience for changing: "Only the subject of experience is, therefore, open to his own transformation."

Other aspects pointed out by the interviewees can be seen in the answers below: coping with problems and difficulties or anguishes are easier if they are treated collectively

and they generate learning; growth, and performance improvement as I share with others; the group's engagement to make changes to happen:

[...] when we share with our partner, our accomplice in education, some subject, some difficulty, then this is adding both personal knowledge and personal and professional growth, more and more facilitating a better performance of our actions as teachers. (Prof. A)

The problems we face in the school context are very complexes, in the classroom, in our day to day life ... The solution to these problems presupposes collective work [...]. The best way for you to overcome many of the obstacles that you've been facing ... huh... And when you can move forward in solutions to some of the obstacles, in the improvement of what you have been doing in the classroom, then you begin to realize that you are really learning. And learning means that you develop yourself professionally, so it's ... that's one of the aspects that also ... work collaboratively. (Prof. B)

We talk so much about the training of teachers, the need to have an atmosphere for discussion, to have an atmosphere for exchange, to have places to exchange anguish many times, too, right? And this is not different in higher education in any way [...]. (Prof. C)

And the collaboration is a third point that, to highlight, I see that is very important, it is the fact that you strengthen yourself, strengthen positions, gain support, the idea of teamwork. So, if you are willing, many times, to produce some kind of change in school, do something that is different (Prof. I)

Collaborative Cultures and the Teacher's Initiative

As the research problem is to know whether informal partnerships mobilize knowledge that collaborates in the professional development of university professors and whether these informal partnerships are present in the university culture, the interviewees were asked about the informal partnerships and the culture of collaboration in their universities.

Some of the interviewed professors said that there is little partnership by the institution's initiative (Prof. F. and Prof. I), because they did not value it, although Prof. E sustains that some institutions perceive its importance and generate some atmosphere for it, and Prof. G says it is part of the institution's culture:

Yes, and I think so, I find it interesting when the university understands it. Some have perceived more than others have, and generate atmosphere, environments, that give an opportunity for this to happen. (Prof. E) k-i-n-d o-f ... (Emphasis given by the interviewee, speaking very slowly). I feel that from some time ago it has been happening a little more than before. (Prof. F)

All the time, we feed on these informal partnerships. So, it's to find a teacher and there it is ... it's a culture of the very institution, I guess. (Prof. G)

On the other hand, if we look at institutions, schools... let's focus on institutions of higher education that do not excel, or do not produce strategies or actions that have value, that drive this more collaborative work [...]. It is not an action that comes from the institutional culture, from the management or a pedagogical project of the institution itself, but it is an action that comes from teachers who are looking for related partners (Prof. I)

Prof. H, despite citing collaborative experiences in his institution in the course of the research, in response to the first question says: "Eventually those projects have the support of the institution", because those are projects that happen by teacher's initiative, which he calls "availability and opening" in order to occur:

[...] partnerships happen informally, in conversations among teachers, ranging from a casual meeting in a cafe, in a chat in the teachers' room, to projects of partnerships that have started from spontaneous approaches among teachers. I believe they do happen in a broad way, but you must be willing and open to it as well. (Prof. H)

Another factor, which has already appeared in the first answer, was the lack of time for this exchange, considering the teachers' workload: "I think it is still quite difficult, due to our workload, the time that we ... there is not enough time for people to trade with their peers [...]. Then, this is an element that causes some difficulty that comes from the very organization of the institution for this collaborative work". (Prof. G)

In response to the second question, the many activities and working hours make it difficult for informal partnerships to occur. We can see this position in other answers:

I do not know if it is the demand for so many activities, so much to do, we became more isolated in those things, intentional, to make plans, did you understand? In the whole ... (Prof. A)

So, the actions are more individual, huh, the teacher often does not have a designated time even for this shared work [...] he is restricted in some moments to some situations, when you have the opportunity to sit down with your colleague, sometimes you have more time, less time, it even depends on the journey of each teacher. (Prof. B)

What the previous answers and the following ones show is that these informal meetings start from the teacher's own initiative, who perceiving this need, organize the meetings and the exchanges as the opportunity appears. The question of isolation discussed earlier by Prof. C, reappears in the analysis of the third question when we treat of the isolation. Here, the exchanges usually appear through social networks or at informal moments inside or outside the institution. The fact of having some coffee or having lunch together, according to Prof. D, does not always express the habit of exchange, as we can also observe in the affirmations:

[...] I think it is more intense in college, in the work environment, or when you come across some difficulty while you are working out the lesson or have already given the class, like ... going into the group and asking for help, asking for information, get it? [...] There is a lot of that for gathering for academic work. (Prof. A)

[...] either they are your personal friends or because of other works, you end up finding, exchanging, and having that moment of atmosphere building. (Prof. C)

[...] it is very much linked to professional's beliefs, conceptions. So ... I've worked in other groups, in which you even have a snack together, have lunch together, and everything else, but you do not have this... I do not know if it would be this word, this habit of exchanging, of commenting [...] this atmosphere of informality is much more connected to the way you perceive yourself as a professional, in some environments. (Prof. D)

[...] but now I feel the movement of the teachers in the teachers' rooms, in the coffee break, in the day-to-day chat, I perceive a greater interest in joining the knowledge. (Prof. F)

At the exit, that teacher sent me a WhatsApp [...] So, see how that happens: Via WhatsApp. The teacher came, we had a ten-minute coffee break when we met, and then we talked and planned actions to mediate that situation [...] (Prof. G)

For Prof. D those situations created by the teachers themselves start from the very conception of themselves as professionals, from their habits of exchanging, and go beyond what the institution establishes. If this collaborative culture is not encouraged by some institutions, according to some teachers, it is present in the faculty that seeks it for friendship with peers, according to Prof. C, and they aggregate according to affinity, as stated by Prof. A. According to the reference, "the culture of collaboration is the basic intellectual and effective substrate to face the uncertainty and risk of failure" (PÉREZ-GÓMEZ, 2001, 174).

Returning to the theorists, Nóvoa (2009, p.17) asserts that it is important for colleagues to be concerned with the formation of the other: "By using this expression, I want to emphasize the need for teachers to have a predominant position in the formation of his colleagues". We perceive here the necessity to search for partners for mutual aid, which has already been seen in the answers and will be further analyzed in the fifth question.

Continuing what some have said - that collaborative work often starts from the very teachers' initiative - the third question has pursued to know whether in the institutions of the interviewees there are collaborative works and how they are being constituted.

Some teachers said that the teachers' meeting in their institutions happens in the pedagogical meetings and are punctual (Prof. A, B, F and I); others are describing how it occurs. (Prof. D, E, and G). Prof. D points to some formal, institutionalized activities that, when finalized, provide informal meetings that, he says, "happen on the edge," such as out-of-doors visits through the environmental studies and interdisciplinary projects. By what is called the common axis, also referred to by Prof. E, the teachers come together to plan their subjects and/or projects in common, which has unleashed not only the idea of a research group but also informal meetings that generate learning and growth. For Prof. E, "[...] people have the opportunity to share ideas. Another thing that is favored in this type of situation is the meeting of people who have common interests. "

Some teachers said that the pedagogical meetings are bureaucratic meetings, in which they have no opening to discuss and present their ideas. They become, then, listeners. They say that the pedagogical meetings, which involve the entire university, take out the time of discussions between them:

Now, I do not know if it is because it is broader, because it involves the whole university ... it is nice, we meet the teachers ... but we end up discussing less the micro, end up discussing less, for example, with the meetings of Pedagogy. They are more restricted, incredible, as it may seem; with the pedagogical week, which is pedagogical, which is for the whole university, which is interesting, but the meetings among the group of teachers became more restricted. Formerly, long ago, we had a more systematic practice (Prof. C)

When there are meetings among teachers, they take place in a more bureaucratic way, in the form of pedagogical meetings, which are often in the format of warnings and information. (Prof. I)

As there is no collaborative culture by the institution and its managers, this collaborative partnership does not happen with the whole faculty, being limited to some partnerships. Although some institutions do not encourage them, the previous answers lead us to believe that they are beginning to provide more meetings. Perhaps they perceive, now, its importance and how they contribute to the institution growth, as Prof. B pointed out in his first response: "So my personal development, it ends up contributing to institutional development." If the institutions perceived the importance of such collaborative work among peers, namely this informal productive partnership, they could provide more time for the productive meeting to happen.

The non-imposition of collaborative culture by the institution's managers is important, but the extreme can happen. As in an interviewee's speech, the lack of vision or the pursuit of other priorities: "In my point of view, this collaborative work has not been happening through an institutional vision, which, in a certain way, has not been looking for it or put it as a point of importance ... huh... perhaps the institution has other priorities today. (Prof. I)

Prof. H, who also teaches in Pedagogy, commented that some teachers who have common discipline end up getting closer and collaborating on a project of the Marketing and Advertising course. The initiative, however, comes from the group of teachers. Those practices are examples of the combination of the formal with the informal: "This experience was already shared in the Pedagogical Week with other teachers of the institution. However, it is a project that starts from a group of teachers, not from a proposal of coordination, or something similar. We do it because we want to. "(Prof. H).

It is also mentioned by Prof. E the fact that formal or institutionalized activities provide the extension of meetings at other timetables: "because from this meeting, you call for some coffee, for a visit to the library, for going to the cinema, but not only in the intention of the walk, in the intention of a common pedagogical interest."

One of the factors observed in the research that delays the collaborative culture is isolation. Prof. E says that the architecture of the university in which he works contributes favorably to informal encounters, answering the second question:

I think there are spaces in which teachers, education professionals, can meet in an informal way, such as cafeterias, snack bars, reading rooms [...]. huh ... well, I think, I do think, it's important, and I think it's a very intelligent action from the one who manages school, university or any other environment, to realize that and promote those situations. Even parties, it is interesting. Even the structure of the buildings, the squares, and space in the "Y" contribute to the encounters. (Prof. E)

In answer to question five, the same professor affirms he has already had another experience in which the architectonic structure did not propitiate the encounter:

[...] of course, I have worked in environments, in other institutions that there was no opportunity for it, for the physical space. That is to say, they are very closed buildings, but without spaces for any type of involvement; then, not just for the coffee space, because it does not have to have any coffee there, but the physical space does not provide meetings, the institution does not promote any kind of involvement. (Prof. E)

Other aspects that contribute to the isolation of the teacher: the work overload and the schedules that may not coincide. Prof. G addressed the issue of having full time as a privilege for the meetings when he answered question four: "I have the privilege of having full time. When I am not in the classroom is when we are talking here. "On the other hand, he stresses the efforts of "hourly" teachers: "So, the moment when the hourly teachers ... they make even more efforts to be sharing with us". Reinforcing the previous thought, we have the answer of Prof. C to question three: "I think even by the way contracts are made. I am an hourly teacher, so as an hourly, everything I do out of class, I do because it is of my personal, professional interest. "

The fact that he is a part-time teacher can make the meeting difficult, but this, according to other answers, can also happen due to the absence of this collaborative culture by the teachers themselves.

Partners by Affinity and Changes in Educational Practice

With the fourth question, we have tried to know what the contributions of the informal partnership for professional development are and what is shared in this partnership. We have noted from the answers that the teachers share the difficulties they have with the class or with the acquisition of new contents; restlessness; academic tips; exchanges of materials, such as books, films, and texts; teaching strategies and successful practices. Both the theoretical and relationship tips appear in the answers:

We share everything, everything that is happening in the classroom, our worries, sometimes a difficulty with the class, with the group, profile of the class [...]. When it is not the profile, questions are more like contents ... suddenly the teacher is taking the discipline that for her is new... Then she becomes restless about the contents, feeling insecure ... then we will share the content, giving tips on other contents, giving tips from websites or texts, even class dynamics we share [...] Giving tips on the strategies that we work in the classroom. (Prof. A)

From a few demands, small demands, right there in the world of the classroom, but the fact that you can talk a little, you exchange some text, you talk there a little of the problems [...] we produce text, we produce research work, we have a project in common, we have class preparation, text exchange, problem-solving exchange (Prof. B)

[...] this closeness of conception with some other colleagues causes us to glimpse projects and to make projects together [...], in topic tips, in text tips, in academic tips, in theoretical tips, and in relationships, it makes you think about the relationships with the students, the relationship with the teachers, the relationship with the institution. (Prof. C)

There may be, among some teachers, only the exchange of materials, that is, a partnership or an artificial collaboration. However, in the answers we can observe that there is not only the exchange and the tips about materials and disciplines, but the interviewees comment on all this "exchange", as something that enriches the knowledge and brings professional development and modifications to the actions in the classes, in the students' formation and even in desires and dreams.

Another aspect brought by the interviewees is the fact that projects in common can be developed, which contributes not only to greater production but also to the effectiveness of that production. Teachers do not limit themselves to exchanging texts, but to producing texts.

Question five aimed to know to what extent the informal partnership assists teachers in thinking on practice and operates changes in the classroom. This response has appeared throughout the interview, but in this question teachers, again, point to the existence of exchanges and tips on materials and strategies:

[...] help from classmates we use new tips to make dynamic lessons, strategies they have used and worked out for some content that has been taught, advice on teacher-student relationships, tips on extra subjects that are not in the teaching plans. (Prof. A)

[...] look, I did it, I did that, I've just discussed such a text, I've just / and all of that is informal, it's often in the elevator, this is like that, drinking water, ah, I have worked such text, I have worked on such a movie; wow ... I knew you've worked such a thing, and it's VERY cool. (In capital letters, the emphasis of the interviewee). (Prof. E)

Another aspect was the planning and preparation of classes after informal meetings with other teachers. Then, Prof. C recalls experiences throughout his formation in which this informal exchange always existed. And it continues in the present:

[...] I planned my classes, we planned, and in completely informal encounters [...] we kept talking about the subjects, and everything came out of those meetings. In the classes we talked a lot about those meetings, much of what we discussed in class, ideas, from activities with students, relationships between the topics discussed ... were discussed in those informal meetings [...] my university teacher training was very influenced by these daily comings and goings ... (Prof. C)

Even a trip to the museum with a fellow teacher can generate discussions and ideas for lesson planning, as expressed by one interviewee:

[...] from everything that we talked about there, she from the area of Visual Art, I from the area of Scenic Arts, I could build a lot of class that I'm going to give now (Prof. F)

Although thinking on practice has already appeared in the previous response, other aspects have emerged:

This rethinking the practice is quite a long process. [...] even this formation that passes through the construction of a theoretical knowledge, that later, when thinking the practice it is converting to the practical knowledge ... it is the real improvement in my professional development, my repertoire, of the construction of my knowledge, and that all this, right, has been collaborating in rethinking, and has been improving, for sure, my practice. It is a rethought practice, but without a specific moment for this rethink. (Prof. B)

The rethinking of practice, according to Prof. B, occurs in the process of professional life. Of course, there is a moment when the teacher ponders about his previous class and thinks of possible changes. In some answers, we can verify the importance given to mutual formation both among those who teach and among those who are formed by them; how important it is for students to observe other more experienced students, as well as the relationship among the teachers who are forming them and so they can reflect themselves:

[...] thus contributing both to their training and to my professional training. (Prof. A)

[...] These students were to guide the students of the fifth year, which is a strategy that we have thought to see if it works. And that too. Having the classroom as a laboratory is another thing that fascinates me a lot, but this laboratory built in partnership as well, and not you alone thinking about these practices [...], thinking how often people do not make it clear to our students who are graduating teachers, and that maybe this is also important to say: Look, it is part of the teaching condition to think about working in a collective and collaborative way. (Prof. D)

The interviewed Pedagogy professors showed this concern with the formation of the students in the previous answers. This aspect is also observed by Flores (2010, p.185): "promoting the conditions for learning (resources, time and opportunities to learn) so that students, future teachers, engage in thinking processes on the process of becoming a teacher." By observing the teachers' work in an "articulated", collaborative way, students are being formed with this vision. This can be seen in the following response:

And at the same time, we realize how this more articulated work structure implies their formation, in a much denser formation, because they can go to a place and build a much larger learning process, but they also perceive this question of importance of the articulated work of the teachers, and that each teacher contributes in a way, I think that ... huh ... we often do not do it with such great clarity, but how much this is also forming as teachers .. (Prof. D)

This formation while forming and the concern with the formation of those Pedagogical students that will form others, are expressed in the Freire's words (1996, p.12), when he states that: "[...] from the beginning of the process, it is becoming increasingly clear that, although different from each other, whoever forms is formed, and re-forms while forming, and who is formed forms himself and forms when formed. "

Every teacher values training in an informal space, but Prof. C takes a stand in formalizing those training meetings. The proposal is to have some time/space in higher education, just as there is in basic education - although sometimes not well used - that should be productive:

That space for thinking, training, is fundamental to the dialogue that takes place in the classroom. Therefore, this figure of an hourly teacher, this figure of someone who comes to teach, we must be surprised, must start to wonder, it cannot be something that is common, that is naturalized. The training space must be institutionalized, and that is our role. (Prof. C)

In relation to the changes that occur in the classroom, according to Prof. I, they could be more profound and comprehensive, if they were institutionalized, so they would not be punctual but would cover the entire teaching staff:

[...] there is no project for this, there is nothing institutionalized, formalized, planned, to the point of being configured in a course project, in a change of course. So, two three teachers who meet, think in a certain way, decide to have a strategy, do it, promote a change in the classroom, nice, but it was a punctual action among those three teachers in that room, it was not something that was possible to exchange with the entire faculty, think about it with the whole faculty, you know? So, informal partnerships happen, whether or not they have a collaborative culture, to my understanding. (Prof. I)

During the research, the importance of taking into account the "other's look" and "listening to the other" appeared to help professional practice. As Loponte (2009, p. 933) puts it: "From the other's look, from a network of friends, I make a difference in myself, I multiply myself, I transform myself."

In answer to the first question, Prof. F pointed out that "the broader the looks, the richer the work"; in response to question five, Prof. E says: "Apart from the formal content, which is very important, those are opportunities for exchanges, to be able to perceive the other's look, very nice." Prof. G. in answer to the same question, states, "Listening to my colleague certainly brings me to a thought of my own practice and then it changes my doing, my actions. Otherwise also, when colleagues who have difficulties with the group also are willing to listen".

Talking to other demands also to stop to listen to what he says, as Freire (1996, p. 43) states: "It is by hearing that we learn to rub² them. Only the one who listens patiently and critically to the other talks to him. "Watching each other's action and learning from each other requires availability. Freire (1996, p.51) also says: "My security is based on knowledge confirmed by the experience itself, that if my inconclusion, of which I am conscious, proves, on the one hand, my ignorance, it opens to me, on the other, the path to knowing". The teacher should not be ashamed of not knowing something, so we could observe it in the interview: "[...] you are not afraid to speak I do not know ... and I turned and I said: I do not know and I, in fact, do not know [...] it deconstructs this idea of the teacher being someone who knows everything ... "(Prof. D).

In this research, we found that teachers, contrary to what the theory comments, were not ashamed to expose themselves to their colleagues, they reported experiences of teaching and learning with their peers and recognized the competencies of the partners. However, this difficulty in perceiving the other and recognizing the competences can happen, but it was not observed in the interviewees' responses, which not all of them were possible to mention here, that they were willing to learn and teach the partner. Freire (1996, p.12-13) points out: "Teaching does not exist without learning and vice versa [...]. Learning preceded teaching or, in other words, teaching was diluted in the foundational experience of learning. "

Formal spaces are presented as spaces for training and thinking, but, according to Prof. E, they do not compare with the informal space exchanges, in which a teacher looks for the other to complete the knowledge, share opinions and strategies for work situations:

[...] there is an intention that formalizes this idea of exchanges, of partnerships, of collaboration. This happens a lot in the scenes of the meetings that are understood as pedagogical meetings, and everything else, or even moments for which topics can be discussed, and even in situations of qualification ... but situations in which teachers jointly put themselves before a theme to think, to be informed, for later reflection. However, I think that these meetings, although they are excellent, they do not compare to the changes that I will call informal. They are exactly the teacher's search for another, for a colleague, for an area partner, trying ... to ... complete what he has as

² Polish them as using an emery in order to provoke the necessary changes.

a domain of knowledge, trying to have a reflection, an opinion and even a hint on the strategies, on the teaching practices that he intends to carry out, also on reflection, on commentary, about classroom situations, occurrences, even relationships with students, with the student individually, with groups. (Prof. E)

In the end, we emphasize that the culture of collaboration is one of the factors that help the continuing formation of teachers, being important for professional and personal development. It promotes and complements knowledge, enriching everyday work. Through intellectual exchanges and the sharing of remarkable mutual experiences, the teachers enhance their practices by reflecting on them.

Collaborative work in higher education, just as in elementary education, is also a way to share anguish, to seek solving problems and to avoid isolation and solitude. The exchanges that are made in a partnership are not restricted to materials such as texts, films, strategies or aid in the development of disciplines, but they broaden the teacher's perspective, making him realize that he can rely on the other's help in his deficiencies, and share the successes of his practice. Perceiving through the "look of the other", as well as looking for new solutions and ways that renew their actions and knowledge, undoubtedly enrich and complement the teachers in personal and professional aspects.

Even when the institution does not present ideas or does not have the initiative to promote meetings or situations of partnership with the faculty, the teachers, in an informal way, seek, according to their needs, ideologies, and ways of thinking about teaching, about making these informal collaborative meetings to happen. Not all institutions have managers who care about having such a meeting atmosphere. Some teachers, due to their own temperament, close themselves by not searching partners for discussion and support. Often the working day, as well as the schedules for these meetings, are difficult and joint projects do not exist. In one of the universities, all this is thought and some formal projects help the creation of another atmosphere/time for informal meetings to take place, being difficult to separate what is institutionalized from what is informal.

To work in collaboration there is no need for intimate friendship, but mutual help and empathy prevent isolation. All interviewees have, at least, one teacher with whom they share ideas, common thoughts, ideology, projects, plans, and improvement of their practices; they care about the development of the other and their students. Many use informal atmosphere/time for their own personal and professional development as well as their teaching partner. Friendship and affinity contribute significantly to the emergence of personal and professional work projects that provide teacher growth and collaborate for the good concept of institutions. However, some of them do not recognize or do not realize this possibility of partnership among their teachers.

Final Considerations

In this journey of the interviews analysis and search for relationships with the theoretical reference, we were able to identify the main aspects that respond to the research problem: to know what the informal partnership's contributions are in the mobilization of knowledge that collaborates in the teacher professional development and if those partnerships are present in the university culture.

According to the data collected, we have noticed that in some institutions, partnerships are not encouraged by management or managers. If the appropriate incentive to informal collaborative practices occurred more frequently, it would provide a greater advantage for the institution itself. It is important that management and managers, not just teachers, think not only of strategies that create productive encounters within their curricula but how much they can collaborate for other productions in a partnership that enriches the concept of the institution and better train its collaborators.

One important point: the universities could take more into account the physical and architectural space to provide the meetings and to facilitate contact among the teachers. Another item raised by some interviewees is related to the time, that is, to the workload that does not favor the meetings among teachers and is insufficient to generate the sharing of knowledge.

Informal partnerships generate learning for all. Many exchanges, material and immaterial, derive from them, the friendship, the affinity, the knowledge, and the new opportunities to try new paths. These exchanges marked the lives of those interviewed who recalled facts that occurred at the beginning of their teaching career and that still contribute to their practices in higher education.

It is interesting to observe that, although the research seeks to know about the exchange among teachers, the fact that the research subjects were the Pedagogy course teachers, allowed them to express concern and commitment to students' learning, because they understand that the view they pass on will affect the way they will pursue their training. The view of those students, then, broaden on how to work with their colleagues in school or non-school atmosphere. Thus, the cycle of partnerships continues to search to avoid isolation in teaching, which was treated in the research as something historical and cultural.

In the meetings outside walls, some teachers pursue to learn the important task of joining theory to practice: the classroom as a laboratory, linking external activities to the university as a learning strategy, changing a little the panorama of formation just inside the classrooms. In Pedagogy courses, there is much talk about this interaction with the environment, extra class education, involvement with the environment, but in practice, they end up being very distant from what students experience during graduation. The classes end up being very theoretical and the practice is limited to the hours of compulsory internships since not everyone has the opportunity to participate in the teaching incentive programs.

The concern not only to improve their professional performance but also to contribute to the other was expressed in the answers presented. Involvement and sharing proved effective in enriching classrooms by bringing new perspectives on materials and strategies that, until then, teachers had not even thought about.

The exchanges happen even among those who do not have so much intimacy, which is facilitated by the social networks much present in the answers. The thoughts, ideals and related goals, being political or educational, bring the teachers closer and allow them to develop personally and professionally. The time together can facilitate those exchanges and provide more effective and intimate encounters, generating friendship for a lifetime.

Meetings that escape from those that usually occur at the beginning of the semester, which in some cases, are only to communicate rules, norms, and determinations, can facilitate communication that generates professional development. According to the research, some universities have perceived this value; others still need to change their priorities.

Undoubtedly, of great importance for the teaching career, are the informal meetings generated by the formal ones, that is, those meetings in walks and trips included in the teaching plan of the disciplines. At those meetings, there is an opportunity for teachers to get to know each other better, to observe, to listen and to talk about each other's experiences, to know how the partner works in his room, which can contribute to his own professional and personal development process.

The teachers have commented on the necessity for the universities more careful look in relation to the informal partnerships, making them systematized, in a timely manner, so that they can share experiences and knowledge, even in a relaxed way. Many institutions require a reflective teacher. When, however, do you find time for this exchange of knowledge with one or more partners? Some interviewees commented that the rapid encounters of teachers in the corridors do not allow developing this effective exchange so that there is a profitable contribution; others, however, believe that even those meetings contribute to changes in practice.

If informal exchanges - that happen by their own will, search and affinity among teachers - were transformed into institutional, that is, they were part of a formal way with pre-established hours, would they contribute to professional development or become bureaucratic and unproductive meetings?

Finally, the contributions of informal partnerships, even if they are not present in the university culture in an institutionalized way, are, in some way, present in the teachers' personal and professional life, bringing growth and helping to build the knowledge needed for professional development. They must remain so, informal because what is imposed or determined from above does not produce the same effect.

References

- CHIZZOTTI, Antônio. **Research on human and social sciences** (in Portuguese) São Paulo: Cortez, 2006. 166 p. ISBN: 9788524904448.
- FLORES, Maria Assunção. **Some reflections on the initial teacher training.**(in Portuguese) **Revista Educação.** Porto Alegre, v. 33, n. 3, pp. 182-188, set-dez 2010.
- FORTE, Ana Maria; FLORES, Maria Assunção. **Learning and collaboration : an intervention project** in a eb2,3. X Congresso Internacional Galego-Português de Psicopedagogia. Braga: Universidade do Minho, pp 766-784, 2009. Available on: <http://www.educacion.udc.es/grupos/gipdae/documentos/congreso/xcongreso/pdfs/t3/t3c52.pdf>. Acesso em: 06/03/2019.
- FREIRE, Paulo. **Pedagogy of Autonomy:** knowledge necessary for educational practice.(in Portuguese) São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 1996. 54 p. ISBN 8521902433.
- FULLAN, Michael; HARGREAVES, Andy. **The School as a Learning Organization (in Portuguese)** . Porto Alegre: Artes Médicas Sul, 2000. 136 p. ISBN: 9788573076349.
- GHEDIN, Evandro; FRANCO, Maria Amélia Santoro. **Questions of Method in the Construction of Education Research.**(in Portuguese) São Paulo: Cortez, 2008. 264 p. ISBN: 8524913959.
- IMBERNÓN, Francisco. **Teacher and professional formation: training for change and uncertainty** (in Portuguese). São Paulo: Cortez, 2000. 119 p. ISBN: 8524907649.
- LARROSA, Jorge. **Tremors:** written about the experience (in Portuguese) Belo Horizonte: Autêntica, 2015.
- LITTLE, Judith Warren. **The persistence of privacy:** Autonomy and initiative in teachers' professional lives. Teachers College, da Universidade de Columbia, vol 91, nr 4, 1990. Available on: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/247944039>. Acesso em Julho 2016.
- LOPONTE, Luciana Gruppelli. **Friendships:** the sweet taste of others in teaching. Cadernos de Pesquisa (in Portuguese) v. 39 nr. 138, p.919-938, set-dez 2009. Available on: http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?pid=S0100-15742009000300012&script=sci_abstract&tlng=pt. Acesso em: 06/03/2019.
- MIZUKAMI, Maria da Graça Nicoletti. School-based training as an institutional strategy. (in Portuguese). In: GATTI, Bernardete. **For a policy of teacher training** (in Portuguese). 1^a edição. Editora Unesp, 2013. 232 p. ISBN: 9788539304080.
- NÓVOA, António. **Teachers:** images of the future present (in Portuguese) . Lisboa: Educa, 2009. 96 p. ISBN: 9789898272027.
- PÉREZ-GÓMEZ, A.I. **The school culture in neoliberal society** (in Portuguese) . Porto Alegre: Artmed, 2001. 320 p. ISBN: 108573076690.

PIMENTA, Selma Garrido; ANASTASIOU, Léa das Graças Camargo. **Teaching in higher education.**(in Portuguese) São Paulo: Cortez, 2002. 279 p. ISBN: 8524908572.

THURLER, Monica Gather. From the evaluation of teachers to the evaluation of schools (in Portuguese) In: PERRENOUD, Philippe; THURLER, Monica Gater at el. **The skills to teach in the 21st century: teacher training and the challenge of evaluation (in Portuguese).** Porto Alegre: ARTMED, pp. 61-87, 2002. ISBN: 8536300213.

VAILLANT, Denise, MARCELO, Carlos. **Teaching to teach:** the four stages of learning. (in Portuguese) Curitiba: UTFPR, 2012. 242 p. ISBN - 13: 9788570140975.