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Collaborative Methodologies in *Stricto Sensu* Postgraduate Studies in Education*

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to discuss the use of collaborative methodologies in *stricto sensu* postgraduate studies, which aim to promote sociological imagination of master students. It is assumed that collaborative methodologies enable to produce academic knowledge with self-confidence and innovation. It then presents itself as an experience report, lived in the Postgraduate Program in Education, from the Universidade do Estado do Rio Grande do Norte, in the academic semester of 2018.2, involving two professors and thirty-five master's students from three lines of research, in a mandatory subject. For its elaboration, beyond the collective written production of the panels, it was requested the individual report of three master's students, intentionally chosen, one of each line, for empiric subsidies. The collaborative methodologies enable each group to create strategies/referrals, shapening the sociological imagination of graduate students, using the individual and collective writing. Finally, graduate students must be challenged to do new experiences, to think for themselves in the different training spaces. Without keen sociological imagination, there is no innovation and creation.

KEYWORDS

Collaborative methodologies. Sociological imagination. Postgraduate. Formation.

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Metodologias Colaborativas na Pós-Graduação *Stricto Sensu* em Educação

RESUMO

Este artigo objetiva discutir a utilização de metodologias colaborativas na pós-graduação *stricto sensu*, as quais visam fomentar a imaginação sociológica dos mestrandos. Parte-se do pressuposto de que as metodologias colaborativas possibilitam produzir conhecimento acadêmico com autoconfiança e inovação. Apresenta-se, então, um relato de experiência, vivenciada no Programa de Pós-Graduação em Educação, da Universidade do Estado do Rio Grande do Norte, no semestre letivo 2018.2, envolvendo dois docentes e trinta e cinco mestrandos de três linhas de pesquisa, em uma disciplina obrigatória. Para a sua elaboração, além da produção escrita coletiva dos painéis, foi solicitado o relato individual da experiência de três mestrandas, escolhidas intencionalmente, uma de cada linha, para subsídios empíricos. Os resultados apontam que as metodologias colaborativas possibilitam que cada grupo crie estratégias/encaminhamentos, aguçando a imaginação sociológica dos pós-graduandos com o uso da escrita individual e coletiva. Enfim, os pós-graduandos precisam ser desafiados a fazer experiências novas, a pensar por si nos diferentes espaços da formação. Sem imaginação sociológica aguçada, não há inovação e criação.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Metodologias colaborativas. Imaginação sociológica. Pós-graduação. Formação.

Metodologías Colaborativas en la Post-Graduación *Stricto Sensu* en Educación

RESUMEN

Este artículo tiene como objetivo discutir la utilización de metodologías colaborativas en la post-graduación *stricto sensu*, las cuales visan fomentar la *imaginación sociológica* de los alumnos de maestría. Partiendo del presupuesto de que las metodologías colaborativas posibilitan producir conocimiento académico con autoconfianza e innovación. Preséntase, entonces, un relato de experiencia, vivida en el Programa de Postgrado en Educación, de la Universidad do Estado do Rio Grande do Norte, en el semestre lectivo 2018.2, envolviendo dos docentes y treinta y cinco alumnos de maestría de tres líneas de pesquisa, en una disciplina obligatoria. Para su elaboración, además de la producción escrita colectiva de los paneles, fue solicitado el relato individual de la experiencia de tres alumnas del programa de post-graduación, escogidas intencionalmente, una de cada línea, para subsidios empíricos. Las metodologías colaborativas posibilitan cada uno de los grupos crear estrategias/encaminamientos, afilando la imaginación sociológica de los discentes del postgrado con el uso de la escrita individual y colectiva. En resumen, los estudiantes de la post-graduación precisan ser desafiados a hacer nuevas experiencias y pensar de forma autónoma en los diferentes espacios de la formación. Sin la imaginación sociológica afilada no hay innovación y creación.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Metodologías colaborativas. Imaginación sociológica. Post-graduación. Formación.

Introduction

This article arises from our interest in socializing an academic experience on the use of collaborative methodologies in the context of *stricto sensu* graduate studies. It is at this level of education that one usually thinks of working in isolation or, at most, with the thesis or dissertation advisor. In our understanding, the orientation process is or should be based on collaborative methodologies, where interaction between post-graduates and the supervisor is a sine qua non-condition for the improvement/deepening of research. We recognize that the problem of mentoring assumes a singular relevance, especially when dealing with collaborative methodologies, because it is in this space/moment of academic training that the collaboration between supervisor-supervisee becomes decisive for the accomplishment of their research, as elucidated by Barbosa (2014).

We reinforce the need for the use of collaborative methodologies in the teaching-learning process in compulsory and optional disciplines and other formative spaces in the *stricto sensu* post-graduation because they foster the interaction between peers and effectively contribute to the development of sociological imagination (MILLS, 2009). We believe that collaborative methodologies favor academic production with self-confidence and innovation since they place postgraduates in the condition of subjects who are authors and producers of ideas. In this sense, post-graduates are equally responsible for the appropriation of knowledge, overcoming the perspective of the mere object of the teaching action. In this process, the graduate student assumes his condition of the author, to assert his role as a researcher in the process of formation (BARBOSA, 2014).

The emphasis on collaborative methodologies does not remove, under any circumstances, the need to study and deepen critical theories (content) that will clarify the functioning of neoliberal and globalized societies and its engendering to the mercantile and productivist logic. We cannot fail to emphasize that academic productivism, in the post-graduation *stricto sensu*, is induced by CAPES when it regulates and controls the programs through its quadrennial evaluations, conditioning the distribution of financial resources to the grade achieved by the programs. It is the mercantile and competitive logic defining the *modus operandi* of knowledge production. In other words, productivism has become state policy (MANCEBO, 2013). In the absence of a massification process triggered by CAPES, as the main regulatory, funding and evaluating agency of the post-graduation *stricto sensu*, there are political initiatives of academic-scientific associations from different areas, there are pedagogical practices that seek to favor a more creative and innovative training. It is in this context that the proposition of our reflections is inserted.

This research consists, therefore, in an experience report, experienced in the Graduate Program in Education (POSEDUC¹) of the State University of Rio Grande do Norte (UERN), in the academic semester 2018.2, involving two teachers and thirty-five master students from three research lines, in the discipline Education and Citizenship, which is mandatory. It is assumed that collaborative methodologies make it possible to produce academic knowledge with self-confidence and innovation, favoring and sharpening the sociological imagination in the context of *stricto sensu* graduate studies.

It is important to note that in the class in which the experience took place there was a deaf graduate student², who was accompanied by two Libras interpreters, who took turns to translate the classes and other academic activities. The class was made up of professionals from different areas of training, namely: Business Administration, Social Sciences, Computer Sciences, Law, Physical Education, Nursing, Philosophy, Geography, Literature, Music, and Pedagogy. Of the thirty-five master's degree students, twenty-three had a degree in Pedagogy.

For the elaboration of this article, besides the written production of the panels³, which was built in groups, we requested the production of the report of the experience of three Master's students, intentionally chosen, one from each line, for empirical subsidies. The work is based on Mills (2009), Barbosa (2010, 2014), Macedo (2009), Schaff (1995), Rodrigo-Cano (2016), Alcantara, Siqueira, and Valaski (2004), Ribeiro and Santos (2018), among others.

The text is structured in three parts: a) collaborative methodologies as an exercise of sociological imagination, in which we explain our understanding of the context in which collaborative methodologies advance in education; b) the written production of research panels from the point of view of collaborative methodologies, which demonstrates the path from individual to collective production through the construction of a thematic panel; and, finally, the final considerations.

¹ This program was born in 2011, after a long and historic struggle of the doctors in Education at UERN. To date, it continues to be a grade three program, with possibilities of moving up to grade four in this quadrennial.

² UERN has been standing out as the public institution in the Northeast region that has most encouraged the inclusion of disabled people in the *stricto sensu* post-graduation program. In POSEDUC, since 2011, four deaf students, one with monocular vision and one with osteogenesis imperfecta have been included.

³ In the context of this work, panel means an individual and collective writing resource, through which a central generating theme is woven and developed. It is capable of congregating around a theme several possibilities of discussion/analysis. It differs from other types of individual or collective written production, such as: expanded abstracts, scientific articles, reviews, and reports.

2 Collaborative Methodologies as an Exercise of Sociological Imagination

Collaborative methodologies will only make sense if we initially define a little better the context and conception of society in which we are inserted, what we understand by this perspective and what is its role in the training of beginner researchers. The intention is to understand how these aspects interfere in the exercise of sociological imagination (MILLS, 2009).

The context in which this work is inserted is that of globalization in its different levels: political, cultural, technological, economic and social. It is admitted that in some parts of the globe this experience is more consolidated and in others, it has been occurring late. Therefore, it is not possible to conceive it in the same way, linear, and/or with the same content in all societies. On the one hand, the fact is that never before in history have there been so many potential changes, promoting technological, political, economic, and cultural ruptures. On the other hand, there are continuities between industrial society and a society that starts to assign capital value to information and knowledge.

Considering these transformations, Schaff (1995) highlights, from three technical-scientific revolutions, new ways of conceiving society, which are not exhausted in themselves. The first one is situated at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century, in England, linked to the industrialization processes. It substantially changed the mode of production, replacing man's physical strength with the energy of steam and electricity-powered machines, which marked the passage from an agrarian society to an industrial society.

The second emerges in the mid-nineteenth century and is demarcated by the expansion of man's intellectual abilities to eliminate increasing human labor and intensify the technical division of labor, as standardization and disqualification are promoted (SCHAFF, 1995).

Finally, the third, which is situated at the threshold of the 20th century and extends to the present day, is based on microelectronics, cybernetics, techno-electronics, fine chemistry, biotechnology, electrical engineering, robotics and information technology. These are transformations that impact both positively and negatively on people's social and cultural life, having incisive repercussions on the teaching-learning processes (SCHAFF, 1995).

The elements that structure these transformations contribute to emphasize that they occur in a historical moment full of contradictions in the relationship between power and knowledge, whose values are incalculable. Moreover, historically constructed knowledge undergoes alterations and imposes other meanings, in which knowledge is and will be the most determining human, economic and sociocultural resource in this new phase of history (ASSMAN, 2002).

The notion of a knowledge society⁴ applies to this reality. Such conception began to be forged in the 1960s by envisioning the social layer of knowledge workers. Gradually, knowledge replaces labor, raw materials, and capital as a source of productivity, growth, and social inequalities (RODRIGO-CANO, 2016).

It is at this point that it is possible to consider that the proclaimed knowledge society is a phenomenon produced by capitalism, as a field of its ideological reproduction, which "fulfills a certain ideological function in contemporary capitalist society" (DUARTE, 2008, p. 13). Therefore, knowledge is treated as a competitive basis and assumes a commercial character, which privileges technique and competence and does not allow a critical view to be adopted. However, it is necessary to fight for graduates and post-graduates to be trained to change their living conditions, and for the University to enable the construction of an education committed to radical social transformation.

This historical picture reveals that the postures and methods of university teaching must be reviewed in order to contribute to the scientific education of researchers immersed in the knowledge society, committed to collective, cooperative and solidary work. There is, in this way, the stimulus to build collaborative networks, exchanging ideas, suggestions and new possibilities to teach and learn.

According to Rodrigo-Cano (2016, p. 85-86), the new pedagogical practices in this context presuppose that:

the teaching-learning process is based on the acquisition of skills to achieve greater knowledge through interactions among other people and with the surrounding world. In short, learning will occur based on motivations and intentions to use what is already known. This constructivist vision of learning based on Piaget allows us to define appropriate and meaningful learning activities with students to achieve greater levels of freedom and collaboration in daily life.

In this respect, we consider that collaborative teaching-learning methodologies are posed as possibilities for increasing the chances of higher education students, from undergraduate to graduate, to develop relationships of self-confidence and innovation in the construction and organization of the knowledge that underlies their objects of study. In collaborative work, it is essential to replace competition with mutual help and problem-solving as a team, accepting and discussing ideas, in which each one is responsible for one of the important parts for the achievement of the work as a whole (PIRES, 1996 *apud* RODRIGO-CANO, 2016).

In this sense, it involves an ethical and respectful commitment to the formation of oneself and the other, collaborating subjects in the activities and problem-situations of the daily life of the beginner researcher. Competition should be relativized, in this respect, and needs to be reduced among individuals, so that innovation and self-confidence processes are prioritized.

⁴ The present study starts from the premise that all societies prior to the current one have been knowledge societies, however, it must be said that the recent development of the human species has embraced changes in different political, technological, social directions (THEIS, 2013).

The motivation and participation of people are the biggest challenges for the realization of collaborative work, whether performed through tools made available by Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), as addressed by Rodrigo-Cano (2016), or based on face-to-face teaching. In summary, we understand that there is no way to develop collaborative activities, at any level of education, without motivated and participatory students and the necessary material conditions for such. Therefore, the objective and subjective aspects are fundamental in this process.

The most significant contributions of teaching work with collaborative methodologies can be classified in four: 1) the conversion of the teacher into a mentor (mediator); 2) the common learning between people of the same and different levels; 3) the organization of space-time through internet mechanisms; 4) the greater diffusion and exchange of research experiences.

In the first situation,

The teacher is no longer the sole and exclusive holder of information and knowledge, but rather the motivator, motivator, instigator, facilitator of student learning (both cognitive, affective, emotional and interpersonal). However, the teacher's role in the work is fundamental, since it is up to him/her to investigate, question, and monitor the work of the groups, so that the work proposal does not get lost in the beginning, losing the sense of collaborative learning. Thus, in the collaborative environment, the teacher becomes the guide and the challenger, and it becomes essential to motivate the group and monitor student participation, taking into account the objectives and interests of the group (ALCÂNTARA; SIQUEIRA; VALASKI, 2004, p. 19).

Based on what was referenced above, it is possible to consider that the transformation of the teacher into a knowledge mediator⁵ is presented as a possibility to decentralize the power of teaching and learning to smaller units of the educational process, providing a classroom led by the student's work guided by the teacher, whose exercise becomes increasingly complex. In this perspective, the student is led to think about the need to have goals to be achieved, to make use of creativity in the construction of knowledge, and to become responsible for his learning process, besides having the autonomy to make conscious decisions in challenging situations.

We can summarize the second situation in the light of Alcântara, Siqueira, and Valaski (2004), stating that, from the point of view of common learning, this process collaborates to increase responsibility for oneself and for others, which leads to a dynamic of learning how to learn and learning to live with the diversity of thoughts.

⁵ The conception of mediation in Vygotsky (1996) is related to a rich interaction process, in which language is seen as the main environment. However, it is important to highlight that in this relationship man uses instruments and signs, allowing subjects to expose themselves and discuss the rules of language practices.

The third situation is situated in relation to the organization of space-time, given the social, cultural, and technological conditions that propel us into the cyber culture era (RIBEIRO; SANTOS, 2018). In it, virtual learning environments have expanded beyond the classroom demarcated by walls, board, and physical presence.

Finally, in the context of cyber culture, the fourth situation is articulated with the previous one. It is the expansion of the diffusion of knowledge as an opportunity to move from a personal, intimate and private object to something public and accessible to external views (BARBOSA, 2010). In theory, we can emphasize that this is possible to the extent that the points of interest of each student are socialized about their objects and what should be addressed in a final product. This product can be exposed in the format of a panel, in which students are encouraged to awaken in themselves the ability to discover the axes of their studies and the points of intersection between each theme, sharpening their imagination.

According to Mills (2009, p. 86):

[...] imagination is the ability to move from one perspective to another—from the political to the psychological; from the examination of a single family to the comparative evaluation of the world's national budgets; from theological school to military organization; from considerations of an oil industry to studies of contemporary poetry [...].

In this sense, the author points out that "it is the ability to oscillate between the most impersonal and remote transformations and the most intimate traits of the human person and to see the relationship between the two" (MILLS, 2009, p. 86). Sharpening this imagination is fundamental to achieve self-awareness and its invigorated capacity concerning what is being studied, experiencing a new way of thinking and understanding the real meaning of the works conceived through collaborative proposals.

Therefore, the globalization context and its effects - although in many ways negative, causing more and more inequalities and competition between countries, systems, and individuals - urge us to think that other paths are possible in the attempt to reduce competitive activities, as we put into practice strategies that value collective work. Knowledge needs to be made available to society as something necessary for justice and human emancipation, involving processes of collaboration and collective construction of projects. Based on this, we corroborate the need to break with the vision of economically useful knowledge, since its negative face reproduces inequalities throughout the territories, as the peripheries have been forced to passively insert themselves into this process (THEIS, 2013). The main purpose of a work of this nature is to enable the tools that can help students in critical reflection about their realities and presentation of projects for a radical transformation of society.

2.1 Collaborative Methodologies: From Individual to Collective Written Production

For the proposition of thematic panels⁶, we consider the lines of research as the structuring axes of collective and collaborative work. The Graduate Program in Education

⁶ In general, thematic panels are held in large academic events, such as ENDIPE (Encontro Nacional de Didática e Prática de Ensino) and ANPED (Associação Nacional de Pós-Graduação e Pesquisa), with
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(POSEDUC) has three lines of research, namely: Human Formation and Teacher Professional Development (FHDPD), Education Policies and Management (PGE) and Educational Practices, Culture, Diversity and Inclusion (PECDI), the first two of which were born with the Program, in 2011, and the third, in 2018. According to the descriptors, they propose to carry out the following discussions and studies:

Chart 1. POSEDUC's research lines and study proposals

Research Line	Study Proposals
FHDPD	Studies around teacher training and its practices, whether developed in Basic Education or in Higher Education, in the various areas of knowledge; professional development and its processes of professionalism and professionalization.
PGE	Studies on educational policies at the different levels and modalities of education, considering the national, state, and municipal regulatory frameworks; management of educational institutions and of the Teaching Systems; and professional practices, with a view to participative democracy and citizenship in our country.
PECDI	Studies on the status of the other, based on (self)formation processes and practices that value plurality and awareness of human diversity; special/inclusive education and the place of diversity as a producer of knowledge and practices in formal and non-formal educational spaces.

Source: Available at: <http://propeg.uern.br/poseduc/default.asp?item=poseduc>. Accessed on: April 14, 2020.

For the production of the panels, the graduate students were grouped by research line, considering that it is the structuring axis where the collective/collaborative work should start. They started to develop their individual production as an attempt to bring the concepts studied in the compulsory discipline Education and Citizenship closer to their research objects. In proportion to the discussions that took place in the classroom, the graduate students were developing the construction of this approximation, as a way to exercise their sociological imagination. It was a more or less successful continuous work, because sometimes the graduate students were able to immediately establish direct articulations with what they discussed in class and their objects; at other times, such articulations required more, since the relationship was not direct and required a greater intellectual exercise. The links/relations between the studied concepts and the research objects are not given a priori, becoming, for this reason, a work of intellectual craftsmanship that is gradually built.

Aiming to contextualize the pedagogical situation that we are explaining in this article, it becomes fundamental to highlight the texts/works that were discussed during the semester of 2018.2, in the mandatory discipline Education and Citizenship. Such materials were

experienced researchers. However, we prefer to bet on this methodological strategy with students of the post-graduation *stricto sensu*, beginner researchers, because we understand that it would foster the individual and collective creative capacity of postgraduates, newly entering the program, as well as the interaction among them. According to Marques (2015), considering the characteristics of the panels, the main one is the development of new knowledge, for the fixation of learning through the awakening of individual sense and responsibility, raising the integration of all components of the groups.

selected by the teachers with the purpose of thinking about education and citizenship in Brazil, whose structure and conjuncture demonstrate a country loaded with social, political, and economic contradictions, its deepest consequence being the very denial of citizenship of its people, which accompanies the constitution of the Brazilian society, as Souza (2017) puts it well.

The process of historical deconstruction of the citizenship of Brazilians advances unbridled in the context of the acute political polarization prevailing in our society, with the very weakening of democracy, which reaches its apotheosis when an authoritarian government, adept of dictatorial postures, is elected by the Brazilian people⁷. We agree with Mounk (2019, p. 135) when he states: "citizens are increasingly open to authoritarian alternatives", which is a worldwide trend.

The theoretical-epistemological scope that permeated the discussions in the discipline Education and Citizenship during the semester 2018.2 was not circumscribed to a theoretical perspective. In this regard, let us observe the table below:

Table 2. Theoretical-epistemological scope in Education and Citizenship - semester 2018.2

Author	Indicated reference	Nature	Year of publication
Jessé de Souza	The elite of backwardness: from slavery to Lava Jato	Project	2017
Octávio Ianni	Globalization: A New Paradigm for the Social Sciences	Article	1994
Boaventura de Sousa Santos	Inequality, exclusion and globalization; towards the multicultural construction of equality and difference.	Article	2005
Noberto Bobbio	The Future of Democracy	Project	1996
Adam Schaff	The Computer Society: The Consequences of the Second Industrial Revolution	Project	1995
Maria Victória Benevides	Citizenship and human rights	Article	s/d
Aura Ramos	Human Rights Education: place of difference	Article	2011

Source: General Program of the Discipline, available at the POSEDUC Secretariat, 2018.

⁷ The second half of 2018 coincided exactly with the electoral process in Brazil for President of the Republic, Governors, Federal Deputies, State Deputies, and Senators. The atmosphere was (in)tense, given the fierce disputes at the national level, and the winner of the election came out: Jair Messias Bolsonaro (Social Liberal Party/PSL), now without a party. To govern Rio Grande do Norte, Maria de Fátima Bezerra (Workers' Party/PT) won. This climate was also present in the classroom, through the plurality of ideas/positions.

In the construction of knowledge, the possibilities of articulation were diverse and depended strategically on the abstractions that each one (or group) was capable of making. This was the main appropriation that we were able to propitiate with the use of collaborative methodologies. Nothing was ready, closed, because it depended on the relationships that the postgraduates were establishing individually or collectively. The construction of knowledge did not depend on the possibilities of understanding and interpretation that could be made in the tension between theoretical references and the research object (MACEDO; GALEFFI; PIMENTEL, 2009).

The postgraduates were (in)tensely involved in the knowledge construction process, as they had to aim for two concomitant aspects: 1) make links / connections between the theoretical content discussed in class and their research objects; 2) build articulation networks with other postgraduates in the same line, to develop the production of the collective text. In this process, the collective construction, the culmination of the collaborative methodologies through the production of thematic panels, did not dispense with individual production. In fact, this was the antechamber of the collective work. Every pedagogical effort was to make the graduate students understand that the concepts worked on in class can dialogue with the research objects, and that the relations between a research object and the references studied are mediated, since they are not born a priori. Therefore, there was an urgent need to read the texts to understand the concepts and identify the central ideas that could contribute to the formulation of individual and collective productions. One of the post-graduate students, in her report, states

[...] based on the analysis of the literature studied, we identified six major themes underlying the cited bibliographic reference: globalization, state, democracy, citizenship, social inequality and human rights. Therefore, we decided to highlight the relationship of each research object with the themes worked throughout the discipline (PGE RESEARCH LINE POST-GRADUATE, December, 2018, p. 2, emphasis added).

We realize that ideas, according to Mills (2009), also contribute to our proposition of alternative methodologies in post-graduation *stricto sensu*. The author explains that the process of "sociological imagination" involves the need for clarification of ideas, through thinking and presenting what was thought.

To make anything you think more objective, you have to work in the context of presentation. At first, "present" your thinking to yourself, which is often called "thinking clearly." Then, when you feel you have done it correctly, present it to others - and often find that you have not made it clear. [Sometimes you will find that as you try to present your thought, you modify it - not moment in expression, but often its content as well. You will come up with new ideas as you work in the context of the presentation (MILLS, 2009, p. 54, emphasis in original).

In this way, Mills himself gives us interesting clues on how to propose collaborative methodologies, since, at the beginning, it is a work for oneself and, later, one helps the other in socializing moments of presentation of ideas. It is a fact that the postgraduates were creating their own strategies of articulation with their research object, as well as building relationships/networks with other postgraduates in the same line of research, with whom they

talked to each other. Without having realized the starting point, the production of knowledge was happening in a critical, self-critical and intercritical way (MACEDO; GALEFFI; PIMENTEL, 2009).

In the dialogue between peers of the same line, the postgraduates were replenished in their energies (FORTUNA, 2000), as if the group became for them the most "intimate" space of their academic belonging. It was also in the group that the (in)tense movement from private to public writing took place (BARBOSA, 2010). In the groups, the postgraduates were getting to know each other, their knowledge and constructions, awakening ideas, creating affective-academic bonds, improving paths, without disregarding the virtual alternatives created to establish relationships and contacts.

At this point of the collaborative construction process, the use of the technological apparatus, namely the cell phone through WhatsApp was also indispensable. Technology was already part of the collective construction process. In fact, it emerged as an idea to enable meetings (even if virtual) of people with countless tasks in life and in the academy, including living outside the course headquarters. This was the moment and the movement to awaken the "sociological imagination", similar to the work of a craftsman, who, to design/elaborate his piece - which is the most exciting challenge -, is weaving relationships, seeing possibilities and deciding paths, because to produce an idea is, above all, to do so,

[...] a struggle for order and at the same time for comprehensibility. You must not stop thinking too soon - or you will fail to know all that you should; you must not let it go on forever, or you will blow yourself up. It is this dilemma, I suppose, that of reflection, on those rare occasions when it is more or less successful, the most exciting enterprise of which human beings are capable. (MILLS, 2009, p. 56).

It is from constant thinking that we are able to put order into the ideas that arise. "But, [...] how do ideas arise?" (MILLS, 2009, p. 41). The author himself does not venture to answer this question. He prefers to present some procedures that can facilitate the production of something understandable to himself and others. From this point of view, collaborative methodologies assume an important procedural role in the consolidation of the sociological imagination. This is the consequence of a hard and constant effort, because only through routine and capricious work can we minimally attribute quality to our ideas.

Thinking should not be an exercise that ends as soon as ideas emerge, nor should it be an endless exercise. Between the beginning and the "supposed" end is the human being, experiencing countless capacities for the production of knowledge. It is in this experience that lies reflection, which is one of the most enchanting possibilities that subjects experience. In terms of epistemological approach, thinking and reflecting are dimensions of the sociological imagination that sharpen and develop the ability to be, to be and to make oneself in the world, which is the most enriching subjective plot through which the postgraduates are constituting themselves in the space and time of their relationship and connectivity with the academy.

We also discovered with Mills (2009) that the inventive capacity - understood as the very substratum of the sociological imagination - has no limits and that the relations/links between concepts and research objects can be as unusual as possible. This is exactly what happened with the experience of the collective production of the thematic panels. The author himself warns that the sociological imagination needs to be cultivated, since it does not happen without routine work and dedication. From this understanding comes our constant insistence that the graduate students exercise the creation and invention of their experience as producers of ideas and researchers in the process of formation.

As the discussions were happening around these authors, with their approaches and understandings, the graduate students were challenged to produce relations/links between the concepts worked on in class and their research objects. This production had the following characteristics: individual, constant and routine. From the individual written production of the graduate students, the panels started to take shape, intensifying at this moment the collective production. The post-graduate student of the PGE research line reveals:

[...] although this stage required a more particular reflection from each participant, the exchange of ideas in the group did not cease. The graduate students helped each other to identify points of contact between the research objects and the themes, given the similarity between some of the works.

That is, in the contours of collaborative methodologies and according to the line of reasoning of the post-graduate of the PGE line, individual production was not entirely individualized, as the group mobilized to contribute mutually, in view of the possibilities of approximation between the research objects. During the experience, the graduate students understood that the research objects of the same line can connect, not in terms of immediacy, but in terms of understanding and interpretation. In any case, they were making themselves in the knowledge construction process, creating and (re)inventing their own findings, in short, they were discovering themselves. Let's see what the FHDPD post-graduate student presents:

One night while I was studying, I called a colleague and she explained to me by showing me some examples, it was a long dialog and, for the first time, the window opened, something began to fit. From then on, I started talking to my colleagues, observing the sentences of one, the comment of another. A conversation here, a conversation there, and I was building this great enigma, the challenge was already launched and now I had to run to figure it out and decipher what, for me, was a mystery.

These writings demonstrate another situation experienced by postgraduates. As understanding prevails, the unknown becomes more and more distant and, consequently, the anguish dissipates. It may be obvious, but it is important to emphasize that knowledge is a construction that takes place as a process of understanding and comprehension of what surrounds us. About this, Macedo (2009, p. 108) explains: "they are artisans who relearn that the world and its fragments hold, dynamize, and produce relations, fundamental spheres for the understanding of how these very worlds are born, intertwine, die, and regenerate themselves through their interactions". In short, the post-graduates were finding themselves and constituting themselves as authors of their work in the interactions established among

themselves, the most important result of which was the discovery that creation and self-confidence are fundamental conditions for the production of knowledge in the post-graduation stricto sensu.

From the three research lines, the following thematic panels were assembled, which were presented and discussed in class.

Chart 3. POSEDUC Research Lines and the Thematic Panels

Research Line	Master students involved	Thematic Panel Titles
FHDPD	12	Citizenship, Education and Democracy: Interlacing Objects of Study
PGE	13	Education Policy and Management
PECDI	10	Education and Citizenship: Educational Practices, Culture, Diversity and Inclusion

Source: Final Written Work, handed in to faculty in December 2018.

Each post-graduate student was constituting himself as an intellectual craftsman in the collaborative making of the panel. It was not a linear process, because the collaborative/collective construction could not disregard the individual findings. In fact, the process of collective writing could not happen by excluding individual writing, but by incorporating it. In fact, at that moment, the construction of knowledge became so complex that many questions came up: how to weave a collective writing without fading individual ideas? How to aggregate so many research objects in a panel? How far would we get with this possibility of work? In order to discuss these questions, we had to go back to the collective production (panel) and scrutinize how they were elaborated, in the sense of perceiving the individual writing (with the explicitness of each one's research objects). The appreciation of the panels consists in trying to see the starting and finishing points of each group, without having to make comparisons, but only presenting the reasoning used to accomplish the proposed activity.

From Chart 3, we notice that the titles of the panels denote amplitude and pertinence with what was proposed, including in two of them we find the nomenclatures of the research lines as a title or as a subtitle. For a better understanding of how this collective construction of the thematic panel was happening, we highlight an excerpt from the report of one of the postgraduate students.

We scheduled a meeting with the twelve master's students from the Research Line Human Formation and Professional Development of Teachers and, with all the texts in hand, we talked, discussed, made observations, reported our findings, improved our knowledge, and answered each other's questions. It was a big web in which everyone helped each other and together we discovered the power of maturation and its effectiveness. We observed that all the texts brought strong and specific marks from our researches. The interesting thing is that each one of us was able to relate the texts we had worked on to our own researches, our dialogues flowed, one contemplated the other, the exchange of ideas was a very rich and effective moment for our discoveries. (POST-GRADUATE OF THE FHDPD RESEARCH LINE, December, 2018).

With this report, we realize how collaborative methodologies favor the learning and maturation of graduate students. They are able to provoke self-confidence and self-awareness of their experiences and, at the same time, enable innovation in the classroom, aiming at the individual and collective writing process. For this reason, we reaffirm the ideas of Mills (2009, p. 94), when he stresses that "to write is to reason; it is to struggle against chaos and darkness. We bet on this idea from the beginning to the end of the writing process.

Although innovation can assume several epistemological connotations, including conceiving it as a result of the knowledge society, whose production becomes socially and economically useful to meet capitalism in its contemporary development (DUARTE, 2008). Innovation for us does not assume this connotation of competitiveness, of productivism (MANCEBO, 2013), of the publish or perish policy (BIACHETTI, ZUIN and FERRAZ, 2018). By the way, we are understanding innovation as a pedagogical practice different from the usual. It is one that challenges students to have moments of creation and collective discoveries. By thinking this way, we consider that pedagogical practice reinforces the need for postgraduates to assume their condition of subject (BARBOSA, 2014; 2010), boosting their inventive capacity. Innovation is to escape from the common place, therefore it frightens and destabilizes. Let's see what the post-graduates told us about this in their reports:

As Caetano would say "and the mind frightens what is not yet old", that is why the beginning of the work was difficult, I would even say painful, given the novelty of the activity proposed to us. No master's student had experience in the elaboration of a panel and, despite the guidance and monitoring of the professors, the doubts were many and so was the fear of not being able to handle the work. (POST-GRADUATE OF THE PGE RESEARCH LINE, December, 2018, emphasis in original).

When the teachers passed the instructions of this individual and group work [...], at first I thought it was impossible to do this work in view of so many similar but at the same time different subjects, [...]. After all, what did they want? It took days of thinking and I could not understand, write, make a relationship with the texts and my research project. I cried, I thought of giving up. (FHDPD RESEARCH LINE POST-GRADUATE, December, 2018).

[...] when we stop to think deeply we start to come across characteristics that we want to see, as the case of politics is present in everyone's life. From my point of view, the work was very important in academic life for learning to think more, [...]. (PECDI RESEARCH LINE POSTGRADUATE, December, 2018).

Therefore, innovation is necessary for teaching and learning in post-graduation *stricto sensu*, so that beginner researchers can exercise their sociological imagination. For this exercise, researchers need to make use of all the tools at their disposal, including the use of new technologies. From these reports, we can see the potential of the collaborative methodology, in which the master's students were challenged to solve problems as a team, respecting the discussion of ideas, which corroborates the studies of Rodrigo-Cano (2016).

This whole process is an epistemological rupture, according to what Cunha (2016) proposes about innovation in the university. In fact, the changes resulting from innovative pedagogical practices can be summarized in the following aspects: 1) graduate students assume their condition of subjects, because they are authors of ideas; 2) the classroom is not

the space of knowledge reproduction, but of debate and construction of knowledge through the use of collaborative methodologies; 3) the teacher assumes the condition of mediator of the process; 4) teaching and learning take place in the midst of criticism, self-criticism and intercriticism.

At that point of the experience, we were already clear on how interesting the use of collaborative methodologies was to mobilize the post-graduates in their exchange of knowledge and learning. From the reading of the collective written work, we noticed that the group of the PGE research line, composed of thirteen graduate students, chose six a priori themes related to the authors studied in class during the semester, namely: globalization, democracy, State, citizenship, human rights and social inequality, so that, based on them, each one could associate them to their research object. The most recurrent themes among the graduate students for relating the texts to their objects were: democracy, citizenship and globalization. With the use of this methodological strategy, only one graduate student was unable to link his research object to the collectively defined themes. All the others used more than one theme to surround their object. The group justifies this way:

All the texts present reflections that help us understand how the influences of the State and society can affect both the exercise of citizenship and education, as well as the processes of management and educational policy. In this sense, the texts point out the context that we must necessarily confront in the contemporary world and that will influence educational policy and educational management. (WRITTEN WORK PGE GROUP, December 2018).

The definition of the themes as a starting point contributed significantly to each post-graduate student's individual written construction, without being disconnected from the horizon that had been collectively established. From this process, we deduce that the themes defined by the group were the points of possible convergence between one work and another.

Continuing the discussion, the organization of the panel of the FHDPD research line, made up of 12 masters' students, followed a different path from the previous group. The methodological strategy used by the group was the definition of broad a posteriori thematic axes, such as: globalization; labor and social inequality; education, human rights and democracy, to incorporate the post-graduate students' objects. That is, such definition happened after the individual writing of each master's student. With this methodology, the identification of the research objects became more difficult, because they did not appear explicitly. Of the twelve research objects in this line of research, we were able to identify eleven, since one was diluted in the set of ideas of the authors studied. The group makes the following considerations:

In the first moment, an individual text was made by each student with his or her research objects, after which a synthesis of the texts was organized with the group according to the selected thematic axes relating them to the studies carried out in the classroom (WORK WRITTEN GROUP FHDPD, December 2018).

With the definition of the thematic axes, our evaluation leads us to realize that the group worked very well with the authors studied in class, establishing relationships with the research objects, which were identified throughout the text. The students managed to internalize the logic of the panel construction and autonomously developed the necessary strategies to achieve the objectives of the proposed activity. In practice, students are guided to a reflection process in situations of collective decisions and democratic coexistence. This is a manifestation of democratic values whose movement is only possible in a democratic society. The attitudes manifested in these reports portray some of the dissensions, consensus, and contradictions that exist in processes that require constant interactions between individuals. In this sense, dialogue is the basis, since the autonomy of students to think about solutions and find answers when they are challenged is exposed, especially in activities that involve collective engagement.

According to Moran (1999), historically, human relations are marked by authoritarianism and reflect in the mirror the image of a backward society. The break with this tradition can be initiated when we educate for autonomy and freedom in formative, interactive, liberating processes that respect differences, free people and organizations.

The PECDI research group is composed of 10 master's students. In the same direction of the FHDPD group, they have elected great thematic axes to group the master's students' objects by thematic affinity, namely: learning, inclusion and technologies; globalization and implications in the inclusion process of people with disabilities; identity, subjectivity, and subject formation. In this group, of the ten research objects, we were able to identify nine, all related to the ideas of the authors studied. The group explains the directions used for the collective work.

However, in a work that proposes to be collective, the connection between the diversity of world readings lacks certain lines that, even if tenuous, give a sense of partnership and collaboration in a reflection that starts from the individual and ends in a collectivity. In an attempt not to make a collage of the ideas of the various points of view, the composition was made from the individual productions of the participants, grouping them by thematic affinity, the analysis of the texts, and their elaboration in topics in an attempt to give greater clarity and objectivity to the work. (PECDI GROUP WRITTEN WORK, December 2018).

Anyway, with the exposition of how the groups were organized to build the collective work, without weakening the individual productions, two basic forms were evidenced: a) definition of themes a priori so that the Masters students could use them in their individual writings from an articulated and collectively thought strategy; b) definition of thematic a posteriori axes to group the individual productions. Both forms presented themselves very efficient in the creativity, in the comprehension of the authors studied, in the authorial construction of the post-graduates, although, in the second form adopted, the possibilities of hiding some research object ended up being confirmed in both groups.

We can also assure that the reported experience presents limits, like any other experience, no matter how successful it may be. Two limits were possible to see, which corroborate the difficulties that stricto sensu postgraduates present in reading and writing. The

first concerns the comprehension and interpretation of the authors studied in class, which is why the difficulties in establishing relations/links with the objects of study were aggravated, to the point of thinking of giving up. The second refers to the collective writing, making it evident that, in all the groups, one or another graduate student did not manage to make explicit, in the text, his/her research object.

3 Conclusions

As postgraduate teachers, when we arrived in a class with thirty-five (35) postgraduates, we asked ourselves: how could we work without distancing ourselves from the quality of the pedagogical process (teaching-learning) in a compulsory discipline? What final work would be humanly "bearable" for teachers and graduate students in those circumstances? In general, what is most common in the context of post-graduation stricto sensu is the production of papers, expanded abstracts, scientific articles linked to literature review, with the purpose of being presented at events and published in journals. Certainly, these are "final products" of learning evaluation that can be accounted for by programs, teachers and graduate students. It is the productivism-inducing policies by CAPES that have minimized the possibilities of articulating other proposals of knowledge production in the stricto sensu post-graduation, beyond publish or perish (BIACHETTI, ZUIN and FERRAZ, 2018).

Working with panels as a collaborative methodology allowed, at the same time, that: the teachers responsible for the discipline had the opportunity to accompany the postgraduates in the production of their work, away from possible plagiarism; the postgraduates started the exercise of reflecting and thinking from their research object, a task that is usually assigned to the disciplines of Research in Education and to the Research Seminars of the three research lines, under POSEDUC. The experience has provoked in teachers and post-graduate students a series of adaptations, in order to provide a more collaborative teaching and a more significant learning. Moreover, it met the evaluation needs of a large class and the post-graduate students' exercise of speaking, listening and positioning themselves during the whole process.

The basic assumption that guided our reflections was confirmed with the realization of the proposed work through the use of collaborative methodologies that enabled the production of academic knowledge with self-confidence and innovation, as evidenced by excerpts from the group written work and the reports of the three master's students.

It was possible to infer that the collaborative methodologies allowed each group to create strategies/routes, sharpening the sociological imagination of the post-graduates with the use of individual and collective writing. Each group followed its own movement, with different difficulties to deal with the challenges of collective production, since most of the master's students lived outside the course headquarters. However, WhatsApp was the application resulting from this technological globalization process that stood out as an enabler of collective communication through the creation of a discussion group for the construction of

panels. The experience showed that the results were positive, because the postgraduates realized that it is possible to think and work collectively without excluding the ideas produced individually. This is important to highlight, because, in fact, the results surprised us. However, the experience showed limits both in reading and writing of the post-graduates, indicating the urgent need to develop strategies to ensure a reading oriented to deepening, with proper records and notes, and a writing focused on the creative and inventive capacity of each one.

In any case, it is evident that the groups organized their texts according to the principle of incorporation of the ideas discussed in class in the light of the authors and the ideas constructed individually by the master's students. Two main strategies were used by the students: one defined a priori and the other posteriori. The first option was used by the PGE research group, which preferred the collective definition of themes to guide the individual writing of the post-graduates, serving as points of convergence between them. The second option was used by the FHDPD and PEDCI research groups, whose definition of the thematic axes emerged after the individual writing. Both forms served to express the sociological imagination, whose substratum is inventive capacity. This capacity inherent to the human being has no limits, since the relationships between the authors' ideas and the objects of research are truly unpredictable.

From this report the following lesson remains: graduate students need to be challenged to do new things, to think for themselves and to work with collaborative methodologies in the different spaces of training (compulsory and optional courses, research seminars, orientation process). As a suggestion for new collaborative work, we could institute less solitary practices in the production process of post-graduate theses and dissertations. Here, we are not disregarding the necessity of individual and solitary production moments, but only reflecting on the possibilities of collaborative practices. Perhaps, the proposition of thematic panels for deepening the research typologies, methodologies, data analysis, reading and interpretation of qualitative and quantitative data would be worthwhile for post-graduate students, in order to fill gaps that are sometimes found in theses and dissertations. Even if we present innovative suggestions, it is still indispensable in the stricto sensu post-graduation field, especially in the Human Sciences, the continuity of works such as directed studies, critical reviews, filings as a way of organizing personal files for the development of studies and research. Without sociological imagination, there is no innovation and creation.

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